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THE  
LECTURES

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION,

IN

BOSTON, AUGUST, 1836.

INCLUDING

THE JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS,

AND

A LIST OF THE OFFICERS.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE BOARD OF CENSORS.

BOSTON:  
AMERICAN STATIONERS' COMPANY.

1837.

*H. Neal*



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*H. W. Heath*

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WILLIAM E. DAMRELL, Printer,  
39 Washington Street.

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## JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS.

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### SEVENTH ANNUAL SESSION.

*Representatives' Hall, Aug. 25, 1836.*

At 9 o'clock, A. M., Mr. J. G. Carter of Lancaster, the senior Vice-President, took the chair, and the records of the last year were read by the Secretary.

The following Committees were then appointed, viz.:

*To introduce Ladies and Strangers.*

Messrs. Fairbank, of Charlestown, Beaman, of Attleborough, Belcher and Carter, of Boston, and Lewis, of Hingham.

*To nominate Officers.*

Messrs. Thayer, of Boston, Greenleaf of Bradford, Pettis, and Adams, of Boston, Hall, of Andover, E. A. Andrews, of Boston, and W. H. Brooks, of Salem.

*To report for the Newspapers.*

The Recording Secretary, Messrs. E. A. Andrews, Adams and Alcott, of Boston, and Greenleaf, of Bradford.

*Voted*, That invitation be given to all clergymen and also to gentlemen who have heretofore delivered lectures before the Institute, to attend our meetings.

The Institute then adjourned to half past 11 o'clock, A. M.

At half past 11, prayers were offered by Rev. Mr. Barrett, of Boston. A Lecture was then read by Dr. S. G. Howe, of Boston, on "The Education of the Blind."

*Voted*, That the meetings of the Institute be regularly held at 9 A. M., and 3 P. M., until further order be taken thereon.

*Voted*, That evening sessions be held at Chauncy Hall, at half past 7 o'clock, for the discussion of questions.

Adjourned to 3 o'clock, P. M.

At 3 o'clock, P.M., the Institute assembled. The following gentlemen were appointed a committee to provide a reporter, Messrs. Alcott and Cushing, of Boston, and Clark, of Chelsea.

Mr. Pettis, of Boston, offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the American Institute of Instruction respectfully recommend to those gentlemen who may participate in the regular discussions, not to continue their observations beyond fifteen minutes at any one time.

*Resolved*, That the presiding officer cause the above recommendation to be read at the commencement of each regular discussion. After some discussion, the resolution was laid on the table.

At half past 3 o'clock, P. M., a Lecture was delivered by Dr. WILLIAM A. ALCOTT, of Boston, on "The House I live in."

Mr. Brownson, of Boston, offered the following as a question for discussion, viz.: "What can the American Institute do, in addition to what it has done, to meet the wants of the American people in relation to education?"—which was laid upon the table, to be called up at a future time.

*Voted*, That clergymen and gentlemen who have delivered lectures before the Institute be invited to take part in the discussions.

A discussion was then held, on the Necessity and Means of Physical Education, in which Messrs. Alcott, Brownson, and Dr. Alcott, of Boston, Greenleaf and Hall, of Boston, took parts.

Messrs. Hall, Alcott and Greenleaf were appointed a committee to consider and report upon the subject discussed.

Mr. Thayer, of Roxbury, gave notice, that he should, tomorrow, propose an amendment of the Constitution of the Institute, so as to omit the words "at Boston," in the third article, first clause.

*Chauncy Hall.—Evening.*

The meeting having been called to order, on motion of Mr. Brownson, the question proposed by him was taken up and

discussed by Messrs. Brownson, Alcott, Pettis, Greenleaf, E. A. Andrews and F. Emerson. The subject was then committed to Messrs. Brownson, Emerson and Greenleaf.

Adjourned.

*Friday morning, Aug. 26.*

The Institute came to order at half past nine o'clock, Mr. J. G. Carter in the chair. The Committee to whom was referred the subject of Physiology, made a report, which was accepted. The list of officers nominated by the committee of nomination, was read by Mr. Pettis, of Boston, and three o'clock this afternoon was appointed for the balloting. Mr. Alcott informed the Institute that Mr. Locke, a congressional reporter, had been engaged, to report the discussions for the daily papers.

At 10 o'clock, Mr. Wm. H. Brooks, of Salem, delivered a lecture on "Thorough Teaching."

The lecturer, expected at eleven o'clock, not appearing, after a recess of thirty minutes, Mr. Kimball, of Needham, proposed the following question for discussion: "What is a teacher's duty to his scholars, in their use of food, as to quantity and kind, in respect to its influence on health and mental and moral culture?" This question, being accepted, was immediately taken up for discussion, and spoken upon by Messrs. Kimball, Pettis, Brown, Alcott, R. G. Carter, E. A. Andrews, Brownson, Greenleaf and Porter.

The following gentlemen were appointed a committee, to confer with Dr. Howe, and ascertain the most convenient time for the members of the Institute to visit the Institution for the Blind, Dr. Howe having politely invited them,—Messrs. Fairbank, Adams and Brownson.

*Afternoon.—3 o'clock.*

The time appointed for the ballot having arrived, Messrs. Carter, Kingsbury and Clark were appointed a committee to sort and count the votes; having performed this duty, the chairman reported that the whole list of officers nominated were unanimously chosen.

## JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS.

## LIST OF OFFICERS.

## PRESIDENT.

WILLIAM B. CALHOUN, Springfield, Mass.

## VICE-PRESIDENTS.

James G. Carter, Lancaster, Mass.  
Lyman Beecher, Cincinnati, Ohio.  
Andrew S. Yates, Chittenango, N. Y.  
John Griscom, New York, N. Y.  
John Pierpont, Boston.  
John Park, Worcester, Mass.  
Daniel Kimball, Needham, Mass.  
William C. Fowler, Middlebury, Vt.  
Walter R. Johnson, Philadelphia, Penn.  
Martin S. Hurlburt, Philadelphia, Penn.  
Frederick Hall, Baltimore, Md.  
Professor Oliver, Hanover, N. H.  
Nehemiah Cleveland, Newbury, Mass.  
Ebenezer Bailey, Boston.  
Solomon P. Miles, Boston.  
Elipha White, John's Island, S. C.  
Stephen C. Phillips, Salem, Mass.  
Henry K. Oliver, Salem, Mass.  
Jacob Abbott, Roxbury, Mass.  
Gideon F. Thayer, Roxbury, Mass.  
John Wheeler, Burlington, Vt.  
Benjamin L. Hale, Geneva, N. Y.  
Dennison Olmsted, New Haven, Conn.  
Samuel Pettis, Boston.  
Ethan A. Andrews, Boston.  
Samuel P. Newman, Brunswick, Me.  
John Kingsbury, Providence, R. I.

## RECORDING SECRETARY.

Thomas Cushing, Jr., Boston.

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CORRESPONDING SECRETARIES.

George B. Emerson, Boston.  
Henry R. Cleveland, Boston.

TREASURER.

William D. Ticknor, Boston.

CURATORS.

Henry W. Carter, Boston.  
Joseph Hale Abbot, Boston.  
Josiah Fairbank, Charlestown, Mass.

CENSORS.

Charles K. Dillaway, Boston.  
Frederick Emerson, Boston.  
William J. Adams, Boston.

COUNSELLORS.

Jonathan Blanchard, Andover, Mass.  
William H. Brooks, Salem, Mass.  
Benjamin F. Farnsworth, Providence, R. I.  
Benjamin Greenleaf, Bradford, Mass.  
Alfred Greenleaf, Salem, Mass.  
Samuel R. Hall, Andover, Mass.  
Peter Mackintosh, Boston.  
William Russell, Philadelphia, Penn.  
Dyer H. Sanborn, Gilford, N. H.  
Goold Brown, New York, N. Y.  
Theodore Dwight, Jr., New York, N. Y.  
Emory Washburn, Worcester, Mass.

At half past 3 o'clock, the Institute listened to a lecture from Rev. S. R. HALL, Principal of the Teachers' Seminary, Andover.

On motion of Mr. G. F. Thayer, it was voted that lecturers before the Institute have the privilege of inviting whom they please to hear their lectures.

Mr. Thayer then moved, that the first clause of the third article of the Constitution be amended, by striking out the words "at Boston." This motion passed by an unanimous vote.

On motion of Mr. F. Emerson, it was voted, that the Institute recommend to the Board of Directors to appoint the next annual meeting at the town of Worcester.

*Voted*, That the hour from 12 to 1 o'clock be appointed for the visit of the members of the Institute to the Institution for the Blind.

Mr. Brownson, for the committee appointed to report on the subject of last night's discussion, made a report, accompanied by the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That no education is worthy the name which does not educate man in special reference to his destiny as an individual and as a social being.

*Resolved*, That ignorance in the community generally, in regard to man's true destiny, what it is, and what are the means of achieving it, is one of the greatest hindrances and discouragements to the educator, in the successful discharge of his duty.

*Resolved*, That the Institute respectfully recommend and urge upon all parents and guardians, and especially, upon all teachers of schools, to turn their attention to the great purposes of all education, and to use their best efforts to enlighten the *whole* community in regard to the grand object which the educator should propose as the end of all his labors.

The report and resolutions were accepted.

On motion of Mr. F. Emerson, the following question was adopted and laid on the table: "Is it expedient, that teachers should engage with determination and enthusiasm, in the work of abolishing the use of alcohol and tobacco?"

On motion of Mr. Lewis, of Hingham, the following subject for discussion was adopted: "Is not the object of our system of free school instruction partially defeated, while it is left optional with parents either to send their children to school, or to let them roam about the streets and fields in ignorance;

and ought not, therefore, attendance on instruction to be made a statutory requirement in this commonwealth?"—This question was immediately taken up, and discussed by Messrs. Lewis, Pettis, F. Emerson, Adams and Brownson.

Adjourned.

*Chauncy Hall.—Evening.*

The meeting having come to order, the question laid upon the table previous to adjournment was resumed, and further discussed by Messrs. Lewis, Greenleaf, of Salem, Clark, Brownson, Alcott, F. Emerson, McNair, of New York, and Fairbank, when the subject was indefinitely postponed.

Adjourned.

*Saturday, Aug. 27.*

At half past 9 o'clock the Institute came to order, Mr. Kimball, of Needham, in the chair.

The question on "The use of the Bible in schools," was taken up and discussed by Messrs. Pettis, Alcott, Hall, Brooks, McNair, and E. A. Andrews.

At 11 o'clock, the Institute listened to a lecture from Mr. J. HENSHAW BELCHER, of Boston, on the "Incitements to moral and intellectual Well-doing."

In consequence of information, that the lecturer appointed for the afternoon would not be able to appear, Mr. Belcher was excused from finishing his lecture this morning, and requested to continue it at half past three, P. M.. The Institute then adjourned, to visit the Institution for the Blind.

*Afternoon.*

Mr. Kimball in the chair. The discussion commenced in the morning was resumed, and carried on by Messrs. E. A. Andrews, Thayer, Greenleaf, of Salem, and F. Emerson, until the time appointed for hearing the concluding portion of Mr. Belcher's lecture, after which Mr. F. Emerson continued his remarks, and was followed by Messrs. Brownson, Pettis, and White of South Carolina.

Adjourned.

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Adjourned.

*Chauncy Hall.—Evening.*

Mr. Pettis having called the meeting to order, Mr. Clark, of Chelsea offered the following question: "Is the introduction of a perfect alphabet of the English language practicable; and if so, is it expedient to attempt to introduce one at present?" which was accepted and laid on the table. Mr. Alcott then offered the following: "Is the necessity of moral education, as the ground of all human culture, felt as it ought to be by educators and by the community generally?"—which, being accepted, was taken up and discussed by Messrs. Alcott, Brownson, McNair and F. Emerson.

Adjourned.

*Monday morning, Aug. 29.*

The Institute having been called to order by Mr. Kimball, Mr. Pettis offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, By the American Institute of Instruction, that we too highly appreciate the invaluable institutions for the promotion of moral and intellectual improvement, founded and well sustained by our ancestors, and vigilantly improved by the present generation, particularly our public and private schools, to desire any radical changes in those with which we are acquainted; but only that while the physical sciences and external means of happiness are so rapidly advancing around us, the physical, moral and intellectual nature of man may at least equally advance, and have equal encouragement:—which was accepted and taken up for discussion. After some remarks from Mr. Pettis, the resolution was laid on the table, and the Institute listened to a lecture from Rev. Mr. KIMBALL, of Needham, on "The peculiar Duties of Female Teachers of Common Schools."

After a short recess, the President gave notice, that the Report of the Board of Directors was before him, and asked what order should be taken thereupon. Half past 12 o'clock was appointed to hear it read.

"The Influence of the first seven Years on the future Character," was then taken up and discussed by Messrs. Pettis, Alcott, Carter, Kimball, E. A. Andrews, F. Emerson,

Thompson, Morton and Belcher, when it was laid on the table.

Mr. Thayer then read the Report of the Board of Directors, which was accepted.

Mr. Kimball submitted the following question: "Would it subserve the benefit of this Institute, if female teachers would make written communications to it of the results of their efforts in the line of their profession?"

On motion of Mr. F. Emerson, the proposition was laid before the Directors, with a request to report.

The Censors as a committee, were requested to report with regard to the publication of the lectures.

Adjourned.

*Afternoon.*

Mr. Kimball having called the meeting to order, and Dr. Lieber, the lecturer expected for this afternoon not appearing, on motion of Mr. Clark, of Chelsea, the question proposed by him (the possibility of a perfect English alphabet) was taken up and discussed by Messrs. Clark, Pettis, McNair, Emerson, Thompson, E. A. Andrews, and laid on the table. The regular subject was then taken up, viz., "The professional Education of Teachers." It was discussed by Messrs. McNair, Emerson, Muzzy and Pettis. Mr. F. Emerson offered the following resolutions, which were accepted:

*Resolved*, That the business of teaching should be performed by those who have studied the subject of instruction as a profession. Therefore,

*Resolved*, That there ought to be at least one seminary in each State, devoted exclusively to the education of teachers; and that this seminary should be authorized to confer appropriate degrees.

Adjourned.

*Chauncy Hall.—Evening.*

Mr. Carter, of Lancaster, having called the meeting to order, Mr. Clark, of Chelsea, offered the following motion:

*Moved*, "That the Board of Directors be requested to re-

commend to the Institute so to amend the Constitution, that any member of the Institute may, at a regular meeting offer an amendment of the same." Having been discussed by Messrs. Clark, Carter, Pettis and Brooks, it was rejected.

"The professional Education of Teachers" was then taken up, discussed by Messrs. Pettis, Alcott, Brooks and J. G. Carter, and laid on the table.

Adjourned.

*Tuesday morning, Aug. 30.*

The meeting was called to order by Mr. J. G. Carter.

*Voted*, That the Annual Report be printed.

*Voted*, That notice be posted in the entry, reminding members of their assessment.

The Institute then listened to a lecture from Mr. T. D. P. SHORE, of Concord, N. H., on "The Teaching of Elocution in Schools."

After a short recess, the question on "The Use of Libraries in Schools," was taken up and spoken upon by Messrs. Pettis, Fuller, of Providence, Dr. Alcott, Alcott and E. A. Andrews, and laid on the table.

Mr. McNair offered the following resolution:

Whereas, the object of this Institute is expressly to promote the "cause of popular education," and "the diffusion of useful knowledge in regard to it," and not being limited in its efforts to any particular portion of the Union, and believing that practical teachers through our country may efficiently coöperate with us in the great work, therefore,

*Resolved*, That conventions and associations of teachers, in the various States, be invited to organize, as auxiliaries to the American Institute of Instruction, and send delegates to its annual session.

The resolution was laid on the table.

Adjourned.

*Afternoon.*

The Institute, having been called to order, listened to a lecture from Mr. H. R. CLEVELAND, on "The Influence of intellectual Action on Civilization."

After a short recess, the Institute listened to a communication from Mr. Pierce, the superintendent of schools in Michigan.

On motion of Mr. Pettis, the resolutions offered by Mr. Emerson, yesterday, were taken up and passed.

Mr. Morton, of Plymouth, then offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, "That a committee be appointed to obtain funds by soliciting our State Legislature the next session, and by inviting individual donations for the purchase of land and erection of the necessary buildings, and to put in operation a seminary to qualify teachers of youth for the most important occupation of mankind on the earth." After being debated by Messrs. Morton, Stone, Fuller, Thompson, Muzzy, Grover, E. A. Andrews and F. Emerson, Mr. F. Emerson moved, that it be amended by striking out all after the word resolved, and substituting the following:

*Resolved*, "That the Institute memorialize the State Legislature to take into consideration, *at their next session*, the subject of immediately providing a seminary or seminaries for the instruction of suitable teachers for our common schools." The amendment passed; but constitutional difficulties appearing, it was reconsidered and laid on the table, and Mr. Emerson offered the following order:

*Ordered*, That the Board of Directors be instructed to memorialize the Legislature on the subject of establishing a seminary for the "*education of teachers*,"—which passed.

On motion of Mr. Pettis, the resolution offered by Mr. McNair was taken up and did not pass.

Adjourned.

*Chauncy Hall.—Evening.*

The meeting having been called to order by Mr. J. G. Carter, Mr. Pettis offered the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Institute be given to Mr. Hoyt for the beautiful style, in which he kept the records of the Institute of the last year, and the promptness and fidelity with which he performed the other responsible duties of his office of Recording Secretary.

*Resolved*, That the prompt, faithful and efficient services of Mr. Thomas Cushing, Jr., as Recording Secretary of the American Institute during its present session, deserve our respectful thanks:—both of which resolutions passed.

Dr. Alcott moving, "The Importance of the first seven Years of Life" was taken up, and discussed by Dr. Alcott, and Messrs. Alcott, Pettis and McNair.

Mr. Kimball then offered the following question,—Do the good effects of promised rewards for literary excellence in schools overbalance their bad moral effects or tendencies, considered in relation to the recipients and to the unsuccessful?—It was taken up and spoken upon by Messrs. Kimball, Emerson, Pierce and Alcott, and laid on the table.

Mr. Carter, the chairman, then gave notice, that the next annual meeting would be at *Worcester*.

Mr. F. Emerson offered the following motion:

*Moved*, That the thanks of the Institute be presented to J. G. Carter, Esq., for the urbanity with which he has presided over our discussions, and for his untiring labors to promote the interests of the Institute,—which passed.

After some closing remarks from Mr. Carter, the Institute adjourned, *sine die*.

THOMAS CUSHING, Jr., *Recording Secretary*.

*Boston, Aug. 30, 1836.*

## ANNUAL REPORT.

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AGREEABLY to the requisitions of the Constitution, the Directors of the American Institute of Instruction respectfully submit their Annual Report:

Charged with the interests of the Institute during the interval between the yearly sessions, it has been their desire to promote, by all means within their power, the great objects for which it was originally formed. How effectually this has been done, in so far as relates to the direct and apparent action of the Institute, the Reports of the several Boards and Officers satisfactorily show.

By the continued care of the Curators, a room has always been found in a central situation, free from unwelcome intrusion, furnished with the most valuable periodicals and many other of the latest publications in the line of the teacher, to which any member of the Institute, having an unoccupied hour, has been at all times able to retire and find the quiet and rest of a home. The Directors invite the attention of members to this room and library of the Institute, believing that they are not valued and enjoyed as they might be. If the members were more in the habit of frequenting the room, it would be still more attractive than now, as it would offer the prospect of good company as well as good books and a pleasant fireside. It is a subject of regret to the Curators, that it became necessary to remove the library to a new room just at the moment when the annual meeting was taking place; so that those members who arrived in town earliest, were not

cheered by the usual welcome to their own. It is for the Institute to consider whether some arrangement may not be made, to secure to the members a more frequent and profitable use of their room and library.

The Treasurer's Report shows the flourishing condition of the Institute in regard to funds. After the necessary disbursements, there is remaining in his hands a balance of \$27. For this favorable state of things, we are, in a great measure, indebted to the munificence of the Commonwealth.

The Report of the Censors shows their diligence and the means they have taken to send back the fruits of this munificence to the givers, and for the purposes for which the funds were bestowed. Large numbers of copies of several of the most practical of the lectures of last year's session were published and distributed, either among the representatives, or sent to the schools of the Commonwealth. What good these lectures are calculated to do, the last printed volume gives every member the means of judging. As long as we shall be able to send amongst the citizens and into the schools, such publications as those selected by the Censors for that purpose, we trust that no unprejudiced person will suspect that we are laboring, or the State dispensing its liberal favors, in vain.

It has been every year a source of mortification to the Censors, that the annual volume has made its appearance so late, that much of the immediate interest of the anniversary was lost, and the volume much less sought for than it deserved, or than the interest which had existed, authorized them to expect. This delay has usually been attributed to the tardiness with which copies of the several lectures have been furnished for the press. Great pains were last year taken to obviate this cause of delay. The committee of arrangements made personal and sometimes urgent applications to the lecturers to leave a copy of their lecture in the hands of the committee before leaving town. These were attended with success; and a copy of almost every discourse in the volume was with the Censors in less than a month from the

time when it was delivered. The Censors deeply regret that these exertions have been rendered almost unavailing, by the dilatoriness of the printers. After the most strenuous efforts, the volume has stolen upon the world with the tardy step of its predecessors.

How far the great ultimate ends of the Institute have been approached by its action from year to year, it would not be easy for any one to say; and it is not for the Directors to judge. The work is going on under our eyes;—are our hands carrying it on? Is our difficult and discouraging labor becoming easier, because our heart is in it? Is the standard of scholarship higher among teachers? Does the office stand better with those who hold it, and with those who profit by it? Are those seeking it as an honorable and a worthy calling, who, a few years ago, would have scorned it for its meanness, or avoided it for its unprofitableness? Is progress made in simplifying its processes? Are these processes shaping themselves into principles, and is our art becoming a science? Are our lectures and discussions shedding light upon our path, and are we cheered on by taking hearty counsel together?

Though it may not be easy to answer confidently, to any of these questions, there are, certainly, some encouraging indications. All real progress is slow: and truth is of such value, that centuries may well be spent in reaching it. The sciences have grown out of the accumulated observations of thousands of fellow-workers, pursued from century to century. The most perfect of the arts has had a slower and still more labored progress. Grecian genius, Norman daring, English skill, and Yankee enterprise, have been obliged to follow, one after the other, for thrice a thousand years, before the hollowed alder or pine, paddled cautiously across a frith, has been changed into a gallant ship or capacious steam vessel, in which we lie down to sleep, and awake in a distant State; having run through degrees of latitude, while the earth, in its even pace, was spinning half a single round. Shall *we* be discouraged, and shrink sulkily from our work, because we cannot trace from point to point the beacon rocks of our course, in a single

lustrum? And having, too, the measureless mind to act upon, and all science and all knowledge for our instruments?

If honestly, and with good purpose, we labor, and still fail of our end, it becomes us not to be disheartened. During the winter session of the Legislature, the Directors presented a memorial, praying the consideration of the appointment of a superintendent of the common schools, and urging, at some length, reasons for such an appointment. The memorial was committed to a respectable committee of the Legislature, who reported favorably; but, in the final action of the House, the prayer was not granted. The object of the memorial seemed to the Directors important; if their action thereupon be approved by the Institute, and their views concurred in, it is in the discretion of the Institute to take such measures as may seem best.

It has, at various times, struck individuals, from different parts of the country, that advantages would follow from meetings of the Institute being held in other places than Boston. This the constitution, as it now stands, forbids; but it has appeared to the Directors, that it would be better, at the least, to enlarge the power of the Institute, as to the place of its future meetings, and they have voted to propose to the Institute to change the constitution accordingly.

By order of the Directors.

GEO. B. EMERSON.

*Boston, August, 1836.*

**LECTURE I.**

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**ON THE**

**EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.**

**By SAMUEL G. HOWE, M. D.**



## EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.

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It is a trite observation, that our language is inadequate to express thought, especially in the investigation of a new and philosophical subject. But there is a yet greater difficulty, that when errors are discovered, or enlarged views acquired, one must continue to use words and figures, which convey to others an opposite meaning. For instance, the philosopher, who sees in decay and death a link in the chain of benevolence, a beautiful provision for the extension of the blessings of life and existence to myriads, instead of thousands, must continue to talk of it as a melancholy thing. If he sees a man fall from a house top, and crush his bones to atoms, he must speak of it as a misfortune, or not at all,—for if he considers it a proof of wisdom and benevolence, that the law of gravitation acts promptly and irresistibly, that the man who fell, as well as himself, ought to rejoice that the law is inexorable,—he must not say it, at least in common language, or he would be deemed mad.

So with blindness : in common language we speak of it as a misfortune ; as a sad fate to which a portion of our race is doomed ; but when we look into the economy of physical nature, and see how it results from the operation of wise and benevolent laws ; or into the economy of the moral world, and see how it effects wise and benevolent ends,—and thus

view it a cause of admiration and gratitude to Divine wisdom, we have no language to express the feeling, but continue to talk of the misfortune, and to say we must bow resignedly, but sadly, to the dark will of God.

The infidel sees in these apparent imperfections of the wonders of nature, a want of foresight or of power in the great Author; the scoffer throws out his taunt about the injustice of unmerited suffering; and even the Christian, when he sees a poor blind man groping his way in utter darkness, from the cradle to the grave, is apt to ask, complainingly, Lord, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

It is true that confiding faith in Divine benevolence, of which the Christian sees a thousand proofs, cannot be shaken by rare or apparent exceptions; and he answers, in the words of him who spake as never man spake, "neither this man, nor his parents did sin, but that the ways of wisdom may be manifested." But how few conceive the full import of these words! how few perceive in this simple language, addressed to simple men, at a period when the science of mind as yet was unknown, all that philosophy and wisdom, during twenty generations, have been only explaining and illustrating!

It would be a work of supererogation in me, to attempt to show, to such an assembly, any of the reasons why congenital physical imperfections, or even intellectual imbecility and idiocy, should be considered as coöperating with every other providence of God, to the welfare and happiness of the human race. The reasons are obvious to all who take a broad view of nature; and even those who do not, have only to consider what man, as he is now constituted, would be, if there were no want, no pain, no affliction in the world. Where would be pleasure, without pain, where sympathy without sorrow, where benevolence without an object?

But the apparent imperfection of nature's works do not exist alone that man may lament them. Sorrow and suffering are not sent into the world merely, that man may be condolent

and charitable: his intellect, as well as his feeling, is to be exerted. There is a task for his head, as well as for his heart; and he who sets himself resolutely about investigating and remedying an evil to which his mind is subject, is more charitable, and more useful to his fellows, than he who does nothing but give liberal alms, and whose tears are ever ready at a tale of sorrow, or a sight of wo. Science may be more useful to the world than charity, in the common acceptation of the term. The world owes more to Jenner, than though he had founded an hundred hospitals; and he who should rid the world of pauperism, would do more for it than many Howards; for the existence of alms and almshouses is as much the disgrace of society, as amputations are of surgery;—it is an acknowledgment that the evil cannot be cured.

It is wisely ordained, that there shall ever be inequality among created beings; an inequality which extends over the moral and intellectual, as well as the physical world. How far the intellectual inequality results from the physical, it behoves me not now to inquire. However much I may be inclined to think that the character of the intellect must be influenced altogether by the character of the physical, I will assume no more than all will grant, viz., that mind can only manifest itself in this state of being, through the body; that a certain part of this body is more essential to such manifestation than the others; in a word, that without brain there can be no manifestation of mind, and that, if it exists in a very small quantity, or is very much diseased, the possessor is but an idiot. But this is no more making the brain mind, than the heart is mind; for, without the action of the heart, the brain is but a lump of fat.

Farther, it is necessary for the full development of mind, that the brain should be acted upon by the external senses; we must hear, see, taste, smell and touch, in order to know and think. But these senses, or the organs of them, are of secondary consequence; the brain must exist, or even vegetative life cannot go on; an idiot may live, and have his

physical being perfectly developed ; an acephalous man could not even exist.

Again, the brain may exist perfectly formed and ready for action, but if the organs of the external senses are wanting, no manifestations of mind can be made through it. Philosophers might once have disputed about what would be the condition of that being who should be without touch, or sight, or smell, or hearing, but the merest tyro in science would be ashamed of wasting an hour upon it now.

You may think I am preaching phrenology to you, gentlemen ; but I am trying to preach only plain common sense. If that and phrenology be one and the same thing, it is not my fault.

Assuming then, what all will grant, that the brain must be acted upon through the senses, in order that mental manifestations may be made through it, the question occurs, whether *all* the organs of sense are necessary ; or whether, when one or more is wanting, compensation may be made by the inferior action of the others ; and if the latter, then which of the organs are of the most consequence.

It must be conceded, that where one of the senses is wanting, the intellect can never be fully developed in all its parts ; nor can compensation be made by the superior activity of other senses. For instance, one function of mind is to perceive and appreciate sounds ;—now if a person is born deaf, he can never by any effort of his own, appreciate, or even conceive of sound. One advantage of sound, indeed,—that of conveying ideas by spoken language,—he may receive in another way, by visible signs, or by written characters. But this is part only of the function of hearing ; it is one way only by which the auditory nerve affects the brain. To all the rest, the mind must be a stranger. Now the question occurs,—and an important one it is too,—which of the senses are most important for the development of mind, and which should be made use of in education. Leaving aside the abstruse question, whether all

the senses may not be reduced to a modification of touch,—as the ear touching or feeling vibrations of the air, the eye touching rays of light,—we say, in common language that the sight is the most important of the senses. This is undeniably the case with regard to the physical world, and all our relations with matter; but it is a question, whether for all the abstract sciences, for the study of the moral and intellectual nature of man, the hearing is not more important; and I shall afterwards show why a person who should be reduced to the alternative of losing his sight or his hearing, ought unhesitatingly to say, let me be blind rather than deaf; shut up the windows of the body, through which I see only beautiful and curious arrangements of matter, but leave open that wider avenue, through which comes the voice of affection and the action of mind.

When we consider man as a race, we find that the external senses are modified in as many ways as there are individuals; some have one sense very acute, and another dull; some have a modification of two acute, and three dull; and so on, in an endless combination, equalled only by the variety of physiology.

Among the modifications, we find it a law of nature, that a certain proportion of every generation shall be born deaf, or blind. I say a law, because it has the characteristics of a natural law; it applies to all countries and to all ages. We have now to consider blindness, and inquire what is the average proportion of those who are born blind, and how far this proportion is dependent upon an uncontrollable decree of God, or how far He has left it to be decided by man's obedience or disobedience of the natural organic laws. When we have decided this, we are to see how far the powers of man may be competent to palliate the effects of a circumstance,—I will not call it evil,—which he cannot prevent.

There can be no more striking proof of the value of statistical details, than their indispensable necessity in the investigation of blindness and similar infirmities. Had we exact knowl-

edge of the number of congenitally blind persons in several countries and sections of countries, and through a long series of years, we might ascertain how far it was dependent upon man's disobedience of the organic laws of his nature, and how far upon the inscrutable, but immutable constitution of things. In the absence of such information, we can only make an approximation to the truth.

As a general rule, then, blindness is more frequent in the equatorial regions, and decreases as we approach the poles. Local causes, however, modify this general rule. Thus Egypt, Abyssinia, and the neighboring regions, are *par excellence* the countries of the blind. In Egypt, particularly, the proportion of blind to the whole population, is sadly great; some writers put as high as one in the hundred, making thirty thousand blind. My own observations induce me to think that the proportion is considerably less, perhaps one in three hundred, or ten thousand to the whole country; though the number of persons with one eye, or distorted eyes, is much greater. In Europe, the proportion generally is about one in fifteen hundred persons; in this country one in about eighteen hundred; or about seven thousand five hundred to the whole country! Is it possible, you may exclaim;—can it be, that from seven to eight thousand of our fellow creatures are at this moment, and in our country, sitting in darkness? Can it be, that this morning's sun, which shines so brightly and cheerily upon us, is to so many thousands around us but a heated, blackened mass? Can it be, that the green and beauteous garb which nature now wears, is to so many but a dark and gloomy pall? Aye! it is but too true; and although, as we shall afterwards see, that the blind are not necessarily the sad and cheerless sufferers we should suppose them to be, it becomes every one to consider how the number may be diminished, or the situation of the whole ameliorated. That the proportion of the blind to the whole population might be diminished by wise social regulations, and by the dissemination of knowledge of the

organic laws of man, there is not a doubt ; but whether the time has come, or ever will come, is another question. At any rate, to so enlightened a body as I have the honor of addressing, suggestions of methods by which the extent of blindness may be limited, will neither be misapplied, nor liable to offend a mawkish sensibility. That the blindness of a large proportion of society is a social evil, will not be denied ; nor will the right which society has to diminish that proportion be questioned. But how ?—in a very simple way,—by preventing the transmission of an hereditary blindness to another generation ;—by preventing the marriage of those who are congenitally blind, or who have lost their sight by reason of a hereditary weakness of the visual organs, which disqualifies them to resist the slightest inflammation or injury in childhood.

I am aware that many people would condemn this proposition, as cruel ; because it might add to the sadness of the sufferers ; and that the whole seven thousand five hundred blind would rise up and scout it, as barbarous and unnatural ; for I have experienced the effects of contradiction to the wills of individual blind persons in this respect. But my rule is, the good of the community, before that of the individual ; the good of the race, before that of the community. To give you an instance ;—the city of Boston, with a population of eighty thousand, is represented in the Institution for the Blind, by two blind children only ; and I know of but four in the whole population. While Andover, with but five thousand, is fully and ably represented by seven ; and it has three more growing up.

Now, how is this ? Why, the blind of Andover are mostly from a common stock ; three of them are born of one mother, who has had four blind children. Another of the pupils is cousin, in the first degree, to these three ; and two other pupils are cousins in a remote degree.

Then, from other places, there are two brothers, who have

a third at home. There is one blind girl, who has two blind sisters at home. Then there are two pairs of sisters.

In the immediate vicinity of Boston, I know a family in which blindness is hereditary; the last generation there were five. Of those five, one is married, and has four children,—not one of whom can see well enough to read. And if the others marry, they may increase the number to twelve or twenty.

Now, apply this state of things to the whole country, and have you any difficulty in conceiving how it happens, that there are seven thousand five hundred blind in the United States? And can you doubt whether or not this great proportion of blind to the whole community, might not be considerably diminished, if men and women understood the organic laws of their nature,—understood that, very often, blindness is the punishment following an infringement of the natural laws of God; and if they could be made to act upon the holy Christian principles that we should deny ourselves any individual gratification, any selfish desire, that may result in evil to the community?

I would that every individual, whom I have the honor to address, would assist in the education of the blind, so far as to give them just and Christian views of this subject. I would that all should work for society, not for society to-day alone, but for the society of future ages;—not in any one narrow, partial way, but upon a broad scale; and in every way in which they can be useful. If a person congenitally blind, or strongly predisposed to become so, or one who marries a person so born, or so predisposed, has blind offspring in consequence of it, I ask, is he not as responsible, in a moral point of view, for the infirmity of his children, as though he had put out their eyes with his own hands?

You may suppose, perhaps, that the infirmity of blindness would incapacitate the sufferers from winning the affections of

seeing persons ; and that with respect to two blind persons, the sense of incapacity to support a family would prevent them from uniting themselves. In the first place, I answer, that seeing people do no better than the blind. Even a blind man may perceive that many marriages are mere matters of course, resulting from juxtaposition of parties, and rarely matters where the purer affections and higher moral sentiments are consulted. And, in the second place, that incapacity of supporting a family will not weigh a feather in the balance with desire, unless the intellectual and moral nature is enlightened and cultivated. Do we not see, every day, cases of misery entailed upon whole families, because one of the parents had overlooked, or disregarded moral infirmity, which ought to have been a greater objection than any physical defect,—than even blindness or deafness ?

But no process of reasoning is required ; for there stand the facts. The blind not only seek for partners in life, but are sometimes sought by seeing persons ; and numerous instances have occurred within my knowledge. It is true, that despair of success in any other quarter, or an equally unworthy motive, may induce some to seek for partners among the blind, or the blind to unite with the blind ; but still, there is the evil.

My observation induces me to think that the blind, far *more* than seeing persons, are fond of social relations, and desirous of family endearments. A moment's thought would induce one to conclude, that this would naturally be the case ; a moment's observation convinces one that it is so. Now, I have found among them, some of the most pious, intelligent and disinterested beings I ever knew ; but hardly more than one, who was prepared to forego the enjoyments of domestic relations. And how can we expect them to be so, more than seeing people ? The fact is, but very few persons in the community give any attention to the laws of their organic nature, and the tendency to hereditary transmission of infirmities. Very few consider, that they owe more to society than to their

individual selves ;—that if we are to love our neighbor *as ourselves*, we must, of course, love *all* our neighbors collectively more than the single unit which each one calls *I*.

I would that considerations of this kind had more weight in the community generally. I would that the subject were more attended to, and that the violation of the laws of our organic nature were less frequent in our country. There is one great and crying evil in our system of education,—it is, that but part of man's nature is educated ;—and that our colleges and schools doom young men for years, to an uninterrupted and severe exercise of the intellectual faculties, to the comparative neglect of their moral, and still more of their physical nature. Nay, not only do they *neglect* their physical nature,—they abuse it,—they sin against themselves, and against God ; and though they sin in ignorance, they do not escape the penalties of His violated laws. Hence, you see them, pale, and wan, and feeble ;—hence, you find them acknowledging, when too late, the effects of severe application. But do they acknowledge it humbly and repentingly, as with a consciousness of sin ? No ; they often do it with a secret exultation,—with a lurking feeling, that you will say, or think, “ poor fellow, his mind is too much for his body ! ”—Nonsense ! his mind is too weak,—his knowledge too limited,—he is an imperfect man,—he knows not his own nature. But, if he has no conscientiousness,—no scruple about impairing his own health and sowing the seeds of disease,—he has less about entailing them upon others. And a consumptive young man or woman,—the son or daughter of consumptive parents,—hesitates not to spread the evil in society, and entail puny frames, weakness, pain, and early death upon several individuals, and punish their children for their own sins.

Is this picture too high colored ? Alas ! no. And if I showed you satisfactorily, that sin against the organic laws caused so large a proportion of blindness, how much more readily will you grant, that the same sin gives to so many of

our population the narrow chest, the hectic flush, the hollow cough, which makes the *victim doomed* by his *parent* to consumption and early death!

Do you not see, every Sabbath, at church, the young man or woman, upon whose fair and delicate structure the peculiar impress of the **EARLY DOOMED** is stamped; and as a slight, but hollow cough comes upon your ear, does it not recall the death knell, which rang in the same sad note before, to the father or the mother? Who of you has not followed some young friend to his long resting-place, and found that the grass had not grown rank upon the grave of his brother,—that the row of white marbles, beneath which slept his parents and sisters, were yet glistening in freshness, and that the letters which told their names and their early death, seemed clear as if cut but yesterday?

They tell us that physical education is attended to in this country,—and yet, where is the teacher, where is the clergyman even, who dares to step forth in these cases, and say to those who are *doomed*, you must not and shall not marry; and where are the young men and women who would listen to them if they did? It is not that they are wanting in conscientiousness; they may be conscientious and disinterested, but they do not know they are doing wrong, because they are not acquainted with all the organic laws of their nature. All that is done in schools or colleges toward physical education, is the mere strengthening of the muscular system by muscular exercise, but this not half enough. These remarks may be deemed irrelevant to my subject,—but they cannot be lost to an audience, whose highest interest is the education of man; and, if I am mistaken in supposing that little attention has been paid to the subject, its importance will guaranty its repetition.

Thus, I have presented to you some considerations of means by which the proportion of blind to the whole community might be materially lessened. I might go on, and point out others, such as early and immediate attention to inflammation of

the eyes in infancy. I might show how advancing science, in this, as in a thousand other ways, tends directly to benefit society; and how a knowledge of ophthalmia,—a little more perfect than is now generally possessed by country physicians,—would diminish the number of blind; this, however, would be generalizing too much. But after all, when man shall have become ever so well acquainted with the laws of his organic nature, and ever so obedient to them, there will still be a certain proportion of every generation deprived of one or more of the organs of sense. It is my part to point out the means of educating those who are without sight.

The subject is an interesting and important one, whether viewed philosophically, or practically. Its full illustration requires an intimate acquaintance with the best systems of common education, and they might reflect back much light upon them. I would, indeed, that I possessed much acquaintance, or the power to make it useful to other methods; but I must plead ignorance, and crave your forbearance, if the crudity of my remarks betray a want of familiarity with what is the vocation of many of my auditors,—the science of teaching.

I hold, then, that education should have for its aim, the development and greatest possible perfection of the whole nature of man:—his moral, intellectual, and physical nature. My *beau ideal* of human nature would be, a being whose intellectual faculties were active and enlightened,—whose moral sentiments were dignified and firm,—whose physical formation was healthy and beautiful;—whoever falls short of this, in one particular,—be it in but the least,—beauty and vigor of body falls short of the standard of perfection. To this standard, I believe, man is approaching; and I believe the time will soon be, when specimens of it will not be rare.

In educating the blind, we meet with one insurmountable obstacle to perfection in the physical nature of man;—we cannot make the body perfect. Let us see how far the imperfection prevents the development and improvement of the

other parts of his nature. With regard to the intellectual, we find that almost all the powers of the mind can be developed by being acted upon through the other senses. And with regard to the moral and religious nature, it varies not materially from other human beings. We need then consider only the physical and intellectual nature.

In the education of the physical, we have great difficulty to encounter. Very often, blindness is one effect of a cause which occasions general derangement of health; thus we have not only the deprivation of one sense, but a weak and puny physical frame. Then, in most cases, where the only original defect is blindness, this itself causes derangement of health, by preventing the person from taking sufficient quantity of exercise to develop the powers of the different organs, or keep them in healthy action when they are developed. Generally speaking, the blind suffer much from want of exercise;—they cannot run fearlessly about, like other children; and even the degree of exercise which the natural buoyancy of childhood would lead them to take, is diminished by the timidity or ignorance of their parents and friends, who fear they will hurt themselves. Instead of being encouraged to run about, and tumble, and frolic, the blind child is too often cautioned to sit still, or to be very careful in its movements. Later in life, in the period of youth, we find them cautious in their movements, and very much inclined to sit quiet in the house; or if they endeavor to take exercise, they are at once fatigued and discouraged;—they complain of lassitude, and attribute to their own weakness what is but the effect of previous bad habits. Following this, a natural consequence, come a long train of physical and moral evils, of which peevishness and discontent are but a small part.

This is a point which deserves particular attention. And if there are any of my hearers who know a blind child in their neighborhood, they can do no kinder act to it, than to advise its parents how to treat it. They should encourage, rather

than repress motion,—they should not be over careful about removing things out of its way, but let it learn, by tumbling over them, how to avoid them in future. It should be made to run and jump about,—to be much in the open air ;—and, above all things, it should be made to practise its ear and touch, in every possible way. There is little danger of harm ;—nature is there, ever watchful,—and the mother's love, increased by the infirmity of her child, will never let it really suffer. Although, unenlightened by instinct, she may help it into helplessness, and caress it into imbecility. I have known blind children, who, at the age of ten, had never been taught (I will not say taught, but never had been allowed), to dress themselves, or to run about, or even to feed themselves ; while, in the Institution in this city, you may see little fellows, less than five years of age, who give more trouble to keep them quiet, than moving ;—who run fearlessly all over the building, and through the play grounds,—who sit at table, and help themselves, and who can tell the footstep of almost every one of the sixty inmates, and even of the cat and dog.

Much depends upon the early education of the senses ; and it is surprising to those who have not attended to the subject, how great is their susceptibility of improvement. You have, doubtless, all of you, heard and known cases of astonishing acuteness of perception, in those deprived of one or more organs of sense ; and I shall merely allude to a few of them, to show how far the blind are compensated for want of sight. I have known blind persons, who could tell on entering a room to which they were accustomed, whether any large article of furniture had been removed, merely by the sound of their footsteps or cane upon the floor ;—who could tell the difference in height between two persons with whom they were talking (even when it was not more than three inches), and this by the direction in which the sound of the voice came to their ear. I have known blind men, who could tell the ages of persons as accurately by their voices, as any of us can by their counte-

nances. To cap the climax, I know a girl who pretended to tell colors by the touch ; this, a moment's reflection will tell you, is impossible,—for there is nothing appreciable, much less tangible, in those different qualities of different substances, which makes them reflect different colored rays of light ; light itself is not tangible,—how much less a red or a blue ray. Nevertheless, this blind girl could distinguish a piece of red cloth from a black or white one ; and she did it by an acuteness of sense almost incredible. She laid the different colored pieces of cloth upon a table, or in the sun, until they had attained the same temperature. She then applied them to her lips successively, and knew which was white, because it felt the warmest. In other words, she knew by her senses what the chemist has learned by delicate experiment and accurate instruments, that different colors conduct caloric with different degrees of facility.

Now, facts of this kind ought not to be lost, either to the education of the blind, or of seeing persons. It shows how much we, all of us, neglect our senses,—how very imperfect we allow them to remain. Blind children, particularly, should be made to feel of every thing, to learn the density, weight, smoothness, smell, resonance, &c., of all bodies within their reach. Now, should these things be neglected in common schools ? The fact is, that an impression upon the mind is more vivid, when made through two senses, than through but one. It is like several witnesses to one fact. Tell a boy that the sting of a bee is very acutely pointed, and he will believe it ; let him look at it with the eye or a glass, and the impression is strengthened ; but, let it sting him, and he will never forget it. We do not act enough on this principle in schools. It is common to show a boy by a very pretty piece of apparatus, that he may raise a great weight with a small power, by a lever ; but it is better to have a weight of two hundred pounds there, and a lever to lift it, and to let the boy use it. Nor

would such kind of apparatus for the mechanical powers, be much more expensive than common ones.

But to go on with the education of a blind child. I said he must be allowed, and even encouraged, to feel of and examine things. Nothing is more difficult than to keep them out of mischief, without repressing this desire of examining things. To tell a blind child not to feel of things around him, is like telling a seeing child not to roll his eyes about, and look at certain forbidden objects. The only way is, to keep such things out of their reach.

It is curious to witness the workings of nature in a blind child, who has found some new object;—he first feels it all over,—he pinches it,—he tries to pick a hole in it; then he smells of it,—then puts it to his tongue,—then rattles it, or if it will not make a noise, he feels for a stone, or a bit of metal and strikes it,—holding it to his ear, and listening to its sound. Believe me, that boy with his energies properly directed, gets more valuable knowledge of things about him, than many a round-eyed dolt, who is satisfied with stupidly staring at them.

Blind children should be thrown upon their own physical resources,—made to exercise and develop their physical organs; and be put early in the way of learning;—that is, put in a way of learning for themselves;—for, as some politicians adopt as their newspaper motto, “the world is too much governed.” I have thought a similar one might be well placed over some schools or colleges,—“the world is too much *taught*.” I mean that children learn too much by rote, and exercise the mind too little. They learn merely words and ideas of others; they get lessons by heart as a task, and run away delighted to play, and in one hour often learn more than in the three that the master kept them shut up. The instructor's art should be to make his pupil *work* with his mind, and to work too, *con amore*.

In the education of blind children, there is one evil, which it is very important, and yet almost impossible to obviate;—I mean a sense of dependence and inferiority. Now, this is not a natural feeling. Want of self-esteem is not a necessary consequence of blindness; but they so continually hear expressions of pity,—there are so many silly persons, who think it is fine and sentimental to show emotion, and express condolence,—that the chance is, a blind child is caught up two or three times a day, and kissed, and wept over, and lamented, until he learns to regard himself as different from other children,—as a peculiar object of misfortune, and entirely unfit to provide for his own wants. He grows up either a petted, spoiled and fretful youth, or he becomes an inactive, irresolute, desponding and helpless young man. Some few escape this, it is true; but there is hardly one in a thousand, and fewer than that among females. They have, generally, a morbid sensitiveness to the opinion of others. Their love of approbation is predominant; but their self-esteem and firmness are wanting;—they are affected to tears, by the slightest reproof;—they are unfitted to bear the shocks and crosses of real life. And a great part of the time spent in educating those who are advanced, must be devoted to overcoming the morbid sensibility acquired in their intercourse with silly sentimentalism at home.

I am the more unforbearing with this kind of treatment of the blind, because it often comes from persons entirely wanting in true benevolence. They will give a tear, but nothing more;—they are profuse in expressions of sympathy and condolence, and often love to be so;—they love to have these “very disagreeable emotions” excited, upon the principle that some people attend executions. Or, they think better of themselves, and feel more content with themselves, from the contrast;—they do not ask (many would hardly care), what would be the effect of their misplaced sympathy, and their long-drawn sighs, upon those who are the objects of them.

**A blind child should never be allowed to consider himself**

as an unfortunate creature. He is not unfortunate; he has existence, and that is a boon; he has senses, and those are blessings;—and though others may have one more, they are none the less to be valued; he has an illimitable mind, an immortal soul, and those are blessings; he has talents, and though others have more, his are not to be buried in the earth. But we shall see, that he has compensating powers,—that he has means of improvement and enjoyment;—and that although organized as the world now is, things could not go on well if all or half of mankind were blind;—yet that here and there, one may live as happily, as usefully, and as independently as those who see. The blind child should be taught, from his youth, to thank God that he enjoys the boon of existence, upon the terms that it is given him. He should be taught reliance upon himself, confidence in his own resources, and hope of happiness and usefulness in life.

But I fancy some of my hearers are ready to exclaim, impatiently, when shall we hear about the education of the blind,—when will you tell us how they learn to read and write? I have already touched upon the most important part of the subject,—their moral and intellectual training. As for the instruction, it is altogether a secondary and minor affair.

People generally imagine it must be very difficult to teach the blind; but they are wrong. To teach the blind, is the easiest thing in the world. And I will venture to say, that a class of blind children, from the Institution in this city, will learn as much, in a given time, of history, geography, astronomy, or the languages, as any class that could be selected from the high schools and academies; and that, of mathematics and music, they will learn more. To *teach* the blind is easy,—to educate them is altogether another matter.

A comparison is sometimes drawn between the situation and the instruction of the deaf mutes and the blind; but there is no other resemblance, than that the *modus operandi* is different from the one pursued with seeing children. The advantages

are altogether on the side of the blind ;—for the deaf mutes, a language is to be invented ; and when it is invented, perfected and learned, how inadequate is it to the full and free communication of ideas. But with the blind, there is no such obstacle,—the medium is a common one, and we can have the most free and illimitable interchange of thought and feeling.

The moral and religious feelings of the deaf mutes are generally dormant when they enter institutions for their education ; while the blind differ not from seeing people, and partake of the stamp of those with whom they have associated.

If you wish to teach a deaf mute geography, for instance, you must first teach him language. With a blind boy, you have only to begin to describe the country ;—you give him his lesson orally, instead of his reading and studying in a book. You teach a blind boy in the same way you would teach a seeing boy,—except that you read or lecture to the blind boy, while you let the seeing boy read for himself. The only difference is in the artificial aids,—books, maps, diagrams, slates, &c.,—and these are small matters. You have only to imagine that all your books, maps, slates, &c., were taken from your school,—the room darkened, and you required to keep on teaching your scholars ; you will then conceive, at once, how the blind are taught. If you wished to inform them the difference between an acute and an obtuse angle, and failed to do so by words, you would mark it upon the palms of their hands, or you would have the figure stamped on a piece of paper, and give it to them to feel. Now, what you would do with your scholars in the dark, we have to do with the blind in the light. Such is the general principle,—as to the *quo modo*, it is of less consequence. But as there is a considerable interest manifested in the subject, I will go into some detail.

When a blind boy first enters an institution, he is put under the charge of a blind pupil, about his own age, whose first duty it is to show the new comer all over the premises.

It is interesting to see the blind thus leading the blind. The one pushes on ahead fearlessly, up stairs and down, almost drawing the other, who follows timidly, feeling in front of him with one hand, and trying every spot with one foot placed doubtfully down, before he will trust the weight of the body to it. When he has become familiar with the premises and the grounds, the new comer is placed at a desk in the school-room, and a sheet with the letters of the alphabet stamped or embossed, so as to be tangible,—these he learns in a day or two, and then goes on with the rest.

The pupils, in the Institution in this city, are taught the same branches, and about to the same degree, as are learned in our high schools and academies. English grammar, arithmetic, geography and history, and music to all. The higher branches of mathematics and astronomy,—the French language,—natural and moral philosophy, to such as desire a more finished education.

As I said, most of the instruction is oral, but much aid, particularly in geography and mathematics, is derived from ingenious contrivances, by which the illustrations are made tangible. With the books for the blind, you are probably all acquainted;—they are printed without ink, and the form of the letter elevated or embossed, and made tangible. The system has been very much improved within a short time, in this country, and the books printed here for the blind have an immense advantage over those of Europe, in diminished bulk and expense, and increased beauty and clearness.

Such are some of the contrivances, by which the artificial aids in common schools are adapted to the wants of the blind; and by them, rude and imperfect as they are, rapid progress is made. It is true the processes are slow, and a blind child cannot read but one third as fast as seeing children;—but, then, he devotes himself with threefold energy,—he studies with pleasure unalloyed, and his mind, undiverted by visible objects, is intent upon the subject he is investigating. Hence, as I

said before, he makes as rapid progress in most intellectual pursuits, and more rapid progress in some, than seeing-boys in schools and academies.

But there is a department of knowledge which opens to them a wide and pleasant career, and upon which they enter with zeal and success;—I mean that of music. Here the blind youth fears not the competition of his seeing rivals. A little attention, on the part of the teacher, gives him a scientific knowledge of the principles; and, guided by his pure and unerring ear, and enraptured by harmony, which he tastes in all its perfection, he advances rapidly to excellence. Already, the institutions of this country have nearly qualified many blind persons for organists; and there is no doubt but the increase of musical taste in the community will enable all to find useful and honorable occupations.

Attention, and considerable attention, is to be paid to physical exercise; and all the pupils in an institution for the blind should devote considerable time to it. At the one in this city, they have a gymnasium, where the boys acquire great hardihood and skill, while they strengthen the muscles and relax the mind. All spend, too, several hours daily in mechanical occupations; and those who have no talent for music devote themselves entirely to work, after they have spent time enough in school to obtain a knowledge of the common branches,—arithmetic, grammar, geography, &c.

There are some occupations in which they can compete with seeing workmen. The Institution in this city has already qualified four blind persons to obtain a livelihood by their own hands, and they are actually obtaining it.

But, in order to estimate fully the advantages of educating the blind, you should see a boy or girl as they come from the country, and compare them with themselves after four years. They are at first awkward, ignorant, and timid; without self-confidence, and without physical strength or moral energy. Ill-judged kindness, by forestalling their wants, has prevented

them from action; and unwise treatment has made them consider themselves sad burdens upon others, and always destined to be so. But they soon find they must rouse themselves, and administer to their own wants; they find themselves in a community of blind, and, undepressed by any sense of inferiority, they are excited to rivalry and competition. The acquisition of knowledge gives them great pleasure;—confinement in school gives zest to the hours of exercise;—hope spreads a bright picture before them,—and time, which once dragged along so heavily, now speeds on gaily, and his wings make music as he flies. Soon you see them become active, intelligent, self-confident and happy.

It is a common error, to suppose blindness, in itself, is a cause of great unhappiness to the sufferer. It is very seldom so, with those who have been long blind, unless they have inordinate self-esteem, and are envious of seeing people. Generally speaking, the want of sight is regretted by them, as the want of an advantage, and not of a pleasure. The man born blind, knows that it must be advantageous to have an organ of touch, by which he could make himself acquainted with a distant grove or landscape; feel the size and shape of the trees, the form of the leaves, the inequality of the ground, &c.;—and if he could have his hands so constituted as to give him all this knowledge, he would like it;—but as for the pleasures to be derived, separate from any advantage, he cannot have any adequate conception of them; and, therefore, very wisely, he troubles not his head about them.

If, then, blindness is not necessarily a cause of unhappiness,—why is the lot of the blind so sad? Why are they generally considered the greatest objects of sympathy and suffering? Why do they have to pass their lives in listlessness and inactivity,—their youth in the chimney-nook, or in the rocking-chair,—eating the bread of dependence at the table of a kind relative, and when he is gone, doomed to pass their old age in an almshouse? Why are they generally weak, inactive,

moping and useless? Why are they burdens upon society,—and why do so many sink into stupidity and idiocy, and die of premature old age?

It is because the *feelings* have been listened to and followed, without thought or reasoning;—the sympathy and pity of men called instantaneously forth by the situation of the blind, has acted impulsively, and alms and almshouses have been liberally supplied. The very means intended to solace and relieve the blind, have often added to their suffering, by making them peculiar and ostensible objects of charity. Ay, the very hand that has been stretched out to cheer and solace, has often wounded and crushed them! The situation of the blind has not been understood,—the wants of the blind have not been known,—and, of course, not supplied. Alms cannot console them,—charity cannot cheer them;—they have faculties, and they want to have them employed;—they have moral and intellectual natures which require to be developed and cultivated, and until this is done, and until self-esteem can be gratified by earning their own subsistence, and making themselves independent of charity, they will never be happy,—never fill that place in society which they are able to do.

If there is any one class in our community, whose claim upon society is clear and indisputable, it is the blind. If any one class has been peculiarly and long neglected, it is the blind. We recognise the right of all the young to a participation in the blessings of education. We have long provided the means for all:—for white and black,—for the poorest as well as the richest,—even for the deaf and dumb; while the blind,—with capacity equal to any,—with wants greater, far greater than any,—have been entirely neglected until within a few years! Compare the situation and wants of a blind person, with those of a deaf mute. The one can move about in the world, he can go into a carpenter's shop, or a shoemaker's shop, learn a trade and become independent, and comparatively happy. But the blind man,—he is helpless. If unassisted

and unenlightened by a peculiar provision for his education, he must pass his days in ignorance and idleness, and often end them in an almshouse. And yet, while institutions for the education of the deaf and dumb have long been established, and are rapidly increasing, those for the blind are but just commencing. Thank God, however, the work has commenced; and in a community like ours, it cannot but go on. Already have two of our institutions placed themselves on a footing with,—nay, I may safely say, in some respects, have excelled,—the best and oldest in Europe;—and there is nothing more ardently to be desired, than to see them multiplied and perfected.

It is but four years since the American public have learned that the blind could be educated;—it is but four years since a call has been made upon their sympathies and charities, in behalf of this interesting class,—and yet, the call has been answered promptly and generously. The work has been begun with zeal and resolution; more progress has been made here, than in the last twenty years elsewhere;—and there is now, for the first time, a rational prospect of a select and valuable library being soon printed for the blind. Already has the best of books, the New Testament, been finished, of which only short extracts had been printed abroad; and hope says, it is but the earnest of many more. That our country may be the first to discharge its duty to those who are rendered its dependents, is to be ardently desired by every patriot and philanthropist.

**LECTURE II.**

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**ON**

**THOROUGH TEACHING.**

**By WILLIAM H. BROOKS.**



## ON THOROUGH TEACHING.

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THE decorous behavior, the assiduous study, the bright recitations, the kind feelings of many of a teacher's pupils are his rightful treasures, and he should fondly dwell upon them in his thoughts, to encourage himself in the lively execution of his heavy duties. What gratifying reflections hover round the band of the faithful! He knows how profitable to them is every one of his well-discharged duties; and this knowledge is the life of his efforts. But the inconstant in duty, now with a good lesson, and now with one tearing the very soul; the disorderly, from temperament or design; the habitually sluggish; the cold in heart and malicious in purpose,—what a sore deduction are these from the amount of a teacher's satisfactions! The great and magnanimous enterprise of his soul may be, and should be, to turn this nettle-field into a garden. How great a public and private benefactor is he, who, carefully observing the disease of each invalid, in mind or in disposition, plans his remedy, and energetically applying it, watches its operation and perseveres in his efforts, till a cure is effected! See the faithless and unfortunate disciples gathered one by one into the true and happy fold, who are successfully and evenly developing, to the joy of their instructor, the faculties of their minds and the sentiments of their hearts.

How shall so benign a plan be consummated? By a thorough, effectual system of teaching and discipline. How many misnamed corrections are applied for failures in duty, without the effect they professed to aim at. The teacher should carefully eschew punishment for the sake of punishment, and every correction likely to be unheeded and unavailing, and should follow up all cures he undertakes. How much useless pain has been inflicted in school! Useless? how much that was positively and deeply hurtful to the child's education! Useless, because the child saw the teacher's vengeful feelings therein, and was steeled with a strong resentment against him and his cures;—or, because the teacher, seeing that something needed to be done, did something that promptly offered itself to his mind, without concluding whether it were likely to be effectual: like some very sagacious physician, who, finding some malady in his patient, cannot spend time in investigating the cause and ascertaining the medical means to reach it, but rushes into his pill, drop, and instrument arsenal, seizes the first that occurs, and dextrously applies it to the case in question. Now the teacher should know that ineffectual punishments lessen his influence over his pupil, and so are not only useless in regard to his education, but pernicious; unless, indeed, the instructor's influence be so carelessly or unwisely directed, that the child is better off if he disregard it altogether. Besides this diminution of the teacher's influence, the most disagreeable and hurtful associations in the child's mind deform the native beauty of his studies, for the risk of which associations nothing but important cures in his mental and moral habits could atone. Let the teacher be determined in his own mind to discover the cause of disease, to find a remedy and intrepidly apply it. A firm resolution, accompanied by the most judicious discretion and the kindest intentions, cannot well fail of success.

One great means of thorough teaching and thorough learning, of saving trouble, and a great deal of it, to both the parties in this case is, for the teacher to contrive that knowledge and the

acquisition of it, that duty in general shall be pleasant to the pupil. How can that teacher expect to effect much, who disables his own efficiency by really laboring to make duty disagreeable to the pupil? who assumes a sternness foreign to his own nature, or indulges a spontaneous austerity in his usual intercourse with his pupils? All the lively and generous emotions of the youthful heart are chilled. The spirit of enterprise in study, which might have been aroused, is stifled, and the quick wit and bright invention are directed to evasions of duty and the annoyance of the teacher. Duty may be done, if its discharge be rigidly demanded, but it is hated, and produces the least possible benefit in knowledge or discipline; and the entire connexion is one of unhappiness and mutual ill feeling, and deeply detrimental to the growth of the higher sentiments of the soul. No, let it not be so. Let the teacher secure his success in training up, not merely a scholar, but a full-souled man, by interesting his pupil in that success. If he be resolute and energetic, he can procure the performance of much more intellectual labor. Let him manifest the best feelings of his nature in his school-room. O, the blind stupidity of systematic sternness, defeating its own objects, cutting the sinews of its own right arm! Unfortunate pupils, the better half of whose inner nature, whose good feelings and manly sentiments, far from being developed, are regularly, almost purposely, stunted in their growth!

Knowledge and duty may wear more smiling features, if the teachers take some liberties with class books, rejecting some parts of little importance or ill-suited to the youthful mind, or letting those come first which come best first in his judgment, and supply such exercises in arithmetic, book-keeping and other studies, aside from the treatises, as may smooth the way from one portion to another, or give a more practical interest to the subject. The teacher should have the subject laid out in his own mind and use an independent discretion in guiding his pupils' approaches to it. Thus in the history of the

United States, after the discovery of the country, select the chief early settlements, the great events in the account of Massachusetts, some two or three Indian, or French and Indian wars, and the most striking parts of the narrations of the Revolution and the last war. Facts in such books are too much multiplied,—the trifling taking rank with the decisive. It is a painting overloaded with figures, and of these, the inferior unduly prominent. The parts should be recast in the teacher's mind. Quantities of trash may be thrown away. It gives great clearness and interest to this study, for a teacher to connect it with a map, directing the class to draw an outline of the country, and mark the places of the settlements, the course of armies and the battle-fields in the wars. An air of reality comes over the study, and the impression is deeper and more distinct. The same pruning, facilitating and arranging hand may invest with increased beauty and satisfaction the study of astronomy, philosophy, the languages,—even arithmetic and algebra,—any book ill-made or ill-adjusted for the young intellect. Why should the beauties of any science or branch of knowledge be surrounded with factitious and needless difficulties? Why should the fair fields of Italy be hemmed in by Alps that nature never piled? If the teacher, leading his pupils to the more fertile plains of learning, find the approaches inaccessible or difficult, through an author's want of judgment, let him not hesitate to take them in flank and enter by the easiest passes.

One main thing in effecting thorough scholarship and education being to induce the pupil to love knowledge and duty, and to prize them for their interest and importance to himself, it is very essential to this end, that temptations to indolence, play or any intellectual dissipation may be removed and prevented from overcoming his better feelings and judgment. Nothing have I found more efficient towards this result,—nothing, indeed, more bracing to the school,—than letting pupils understand, by all their experience, that there is no

escape from the discharge of duty. They will be made entirely sensible of this, if, whenever they fail to recite, they are required,—after the exercises of the school are over, and those that have done their duty are gone,—to satisfy you that that they have well gotten their lessons at last. In my own school, the higher branches of an English education are taught, including a rather extensive course of mathematics. Instruction is also given in French and Spanish. The number of boys for the past year has averaged more than sixty, and I have no assistance. I generally secure order and quiet, by making it the boys' interest to be still,—dismissing the school fifteen minutes before the usual time, if it has been still. More than this is gained to the scholars, by their being undisturbed in study, and to me in my duties,—having little managing to do, but devoting nearly all my time to instruction. By this means, also, another inducement is offered for faithfulness in duty, as all are eager to take advantage of the time thus offered. I have, for six months back, stopped every one who failed at recitation, and mildly but resolutely insisted upon the performance of his duty. When I have reëxamined all, I dismiss those who pass successfully this second ordeal, and reserve those not yet fully prepared till they are so. At first, I frequently found it necessary to spend a long time with them. This was severe discipline to myself as well as to the delinquents; but when I was found firm,—above all, firm with kindness,—it was held sound doctrine and good policy, to learn lessons well in the first instance; so that now I have comparatively little trouble. There is, to be sure, great danger of a pupil's being excited and angry under so severe an infliction, if the teacher do not perfectly control himself. But being successful in this myself, who am quick tempered, I conclude others can do it. Suppose the object accomplished be merely the thorough learning the lesson, the entire incorporation of it into the pupil's mind, there is a satisfaction about duty well done, without which a teacher should not feel at ease. But, if

ance, every idea is fully understood and traced out to its obvious bearing and application, and then all so studied and wrestled with, that the whole lesson will pass through the mind without suggestions in the shape of questions or in any other form. This is true acquisition of knowledge; this is strengthening discipline; this is growth to the mind. Many pupils learn lessons by a mere mechanical process of verbal, barren memory, without the light of an idea once breaking upon their minds, without thinking of their being in pursuit of knowledge, or feeling the least hunger or thirst after information. They pass over a lesson, like a dull and incurious traveller in a foreign country, who darts forth no inquisitive glimpses at scenery, makes no inquiries, is led to no reflections, but is only anxious to arrive at a stopping-place. How soon would a *true* teacher,—with feelings towards his pupils sincerely paternal, full of wisdom drawn from constant reflection upon his own experience and the observation of youthful character, with a pride in his profession, and a love for the curious experiments and interesting processes he is managing in the science of human nature,—how soon would such a teacher begin a reform in that pupil's Lethæan mind!

How would he effect a reform? Mainly by the management of recitations. By frequent calls for the signification of words or phrases in the lesson, opinions about matters of fact, the object of actions mentioned in history, the thing settled by any portion of a chain of reasoning in mathematics, by favoring recitations by the sense rather than by the words, by not being backward in explanations and illustrations himself. Such a mode of recitation will be much more attractive than a close adherence to the language or even the ideas of the text-book. Need I say how much more thorough is such teaching? Let no teacher be satisfied with a verbal recitation. Let him not rest contented with answers to sums in arithmetic and algebra, nor even with the reading of the work, but require reasons and explanations for every thing not self-evident. This is the

training that will give the pupil, altogether the best fruit of his mathematical studies, an accurate mind, uneasy without clear light upon a subject, grasping the beginning, the middle and the end, and tenacious in its hold to a full consummation. Go to the bottom of scholars' minds, and ascertain if they understand. The keen but friendly encounter of the teacher's and pupil's intellects enlivens the latter, not merely when reciting, but in the preparation of his lessons, and in all his duties.

Recitations may also be made pleasant and profitable, by securing the attention of all the members of the class during the entire exercise. How can this object be effected? By calling upon them indiscriminately, and expecting each one to be attending and ready to begin where the last left off, and, if questions are asked, giving the query first, then the name of the boy who is to answer it. Let each also understand, by precept and by practice, that he is liable to be called on any number of times, and always expected to be ready. Another, and I think valuable, method of keeping the whole mind of a class to one point, watching every step in the progress of the exercise, is to require each pupil to be able to repeat what any other may have just recited. They should have the privilege of holding up the hand to signify that they do not hear, or do not understand; but, in case no such signal be given, should be held responsible, if called on, and be considered as failing to recite, in failing to repeat. By a few such demands every exercise has enabled me to secure the closest attention, tested by successful trials, while large classes of twenty or more are engaged in recitation. If by these means the object is accomplished, how much is achieved! Banished are the uneasy feelings of the boys, who, having recited, think they have nothing to do; gone are their restlessness and troublesomeness to the teachers! How, too, is the lesson rivetted in their minds! How well are all explanations heard and garnered up! What a noble intellectual discipline the youthful mind passes through!

I would remark, before leaving the subject of recitations, that

as lessons should be learned so fully that they will entirely pass through the mind readily without being suggested by questions, so it is well, in many studies, that they should be recited. In geometry and history, for instance, after one pupil has recited a satisfactory portion, let another, without a question, when merely named, begin where he concluded. If, however, he should omit a few things he should not be interrupted, but be questioned upon them after finishing his own statement. How much greater a benefit to a child's mind is a lesson so learned and so recited, both as to knowledge and to discipline, from that in which,—carelessly committed by piecemeal, in the expectation that half will be told in the questions to be put,—the whole is so minced and frittered away by prying into his mind with queries and broad hints at answers, that no comprehensive view is taken of it, and all connexion between the parts is lost. This mode of reciting is, I beg leave to say, no closet speculation, but my own experience in several cases fairly recorded. It seems to me to require in the pupil, a more thorough acquisition of the knowledge contained in the lesson, and its more intimate incorporation into his mind, and also a greater and more invigorating discipline of the faculties.

One of a teacher's numerous duties is not yet mentioned,—a judicious assignment of lessons. Work well laid out is half done. The lessons of each session of a school should all be considered and properly adjusted by the teacher, before the hour of study arrives. I am in the habit of repairing to my school-room a certain period of time, such as I find practically sufficient, previous to the hour appointed for the pupils to assemble. I have then time for reflection, with no other urgent duties pressing into my mind. Thus time may be saved to the pupil and trouble to the teacher, by not cutting the lessons too short,—discouragement to the one and anxiety to the other by their not being too difficult. A careful examination will lead to a judicious assignment. That particular kind of intellectual duty, mathematics, language or any other, can be ap-

pointed which is suited to the existing necessities of scholars' minds. By proper consideration, the most arduous labor may be given to the hour of greatest vigor; penmanship may be assigned to some season better than one when the hands are trembling with exercise, as is the case directly after recess; and the easiest and most attractive parts of duty fall to the periods of greatest lassitude or weariness. Another advantage of some moment is also incidentally secured, which is this, the teacher is not tardy himself, and gives his scholars the example of punctuality.

Another practical suggestion I will not omit, viz., to arrange pupils in their ordinary seats and recitation, with a watchful reference to their influence upon each other. Two or three lively and excitable youths should not be permitted to sit together; sober them by a suitable sprinkling of the steady and the studious. Be sure, however, that there will be moral strength enough in the good to stand against the evil, not power in the wrong sufficient to overcome the right. The teacher should, of course, be perfect master of his school, and order a boy to give up a favorite seat, to do this or that, with entire freedom, when he conceives it expedient.

I consider it very important, that a teacher should keep a record of failures in each recitation, and this will also be a record of the faithful and successful pupils. A blank book; to contain in alphabetical order the names of all in every class, and ruled with blank spaces against them, is the ground-work for the annals of the school. When any one has been unable to recite, the initial letter of the study should be put against his name. In this way, instead of being left to a general, and, in a large school, probably vague, impression of a pupil's progress, he has an accurate analysis of his mental character, and also in some degree of his moral. For, by diligently summing up accounts, week after week and month after month, the deficiencies and excellences of each youth, in his various studies, will be apparent, and by comparing them for any given period with

themselves for any previous period in the same department, their gain or loss, and their efforts, that is, their morality in this respect, will be made manifest. But most of all, the teacher can see clearly where his care and hand are needed; and he should be judicious, but bold, enterprising and persevering in reform.

What, then, is the valuable and important result to be expected, from the thorough teaching and effectual discipline I have been recommending? A great effect,—the most decisive consequences as to the mind and *character* of the pupil,—must follow now in youth, with regard to present duties and career, and hereafter, in respect to the vigor and success with which he shall play his part in life. We have inspected the process of dealing with him; let us now examine the results evolved in the various operations of his mind. It has been shown, I think, conclusively, that what had once been regarded as the four corner-stones of the human mind, the attention, memory, judgment and imagination, are not fundamental powers of it. Still, these words have an extremely important meaning, and they, or similar terms, are of indispensable utility in expressing the modes of action of the fundamental powers. Though the mind may not be able to attend, with the same closeness, in the exercise of different faculties, so there is no general *power* of attention; still, the term is of use, as stating the *fact* of the *application* of the mind through any one of its faculties. The memory signifies the retrospective and renewing operation of each one of the mental powers, however much one may surpass another in the facility and extent of the process. The judgment varies in the various powers, but means the same operation in all. One faculty imagines more forcibly and extensively than another, but each imagines.

Now, the result of thorough teaching and discipline is, to strengthen and quicken the various powers of the mind in all their functions. Nearly all the primitive faculties are exercised in the various lessons and discipline of a school; and if those

lessons be thoroughly learned and recited, and the discipline be effectual, then the efficiency of those faculties is greatly increased in all their modes of action, including attention, memory, judgment and imagination.

Who has not seen people,—who has not felt himself,—incapable of attending long with unwinking faculties to any discourse or transaction without the loss of a thought in the address, or a circumstance in the transaction? I dare say it has often happened, since this lecture was begun. Most persons lose a very large number of them, many more than they are themselves aware of. A man will utterly deny, that any such thing was said or done, as you know and assert to have been said or done in his presence; unconsciously he did not happen at that moment to be giving his attention, or to go back to the probable source of the evil; thorough faithfulness not being required of him in lessons and recitations, he was educated to habits of inattention. If a man have been so educated that he can if he choose attend to the longest address or sermon, never distracted by things around him, lost in reverie, nor seduced away by thoughts foreign to the subject; if he have the control over his mind in his business, so that whatever he has set himself about, is the one great purpose of his existence till it is finished;—that man has one main end of education attained, and no matter how he made the acquisition, it is worth more to him than the possession of any branch of knowledge; for with it, he can soon master any one of them all,—with it he is ready for any effort, and can do any thing. He has the power of succeeding in any study, or in any business. If to the intrinsic importance of the attention, or the vigorous application of the faculties of the mind when they are exerted, we add its value as the foundation of the memory and imagination, we need nothing more to enhance our sense of the necessity of devoting to it the most sedulous care.

Turn to the memory of the great historian of the mind. If a youth have his faculties so educated to retrospection or to

memory, that he can readily fix in his mind, and retain copiously and precisely, not only whatever he may try to commit, but events also, and the appearances of things that he may have seen, thought or felt, it is of small moment to him, whether he know, or do not know, a passage in this or that author, this or that principle in mathematics. He has his faculties in their renovating office of memory so well trained, and so vigorous within him, that in all his studies and in the daily concerns of life, it is worth far,—far more to him than any such individual efforts can ever be. What is the worth of a painting of Raphael, compared with the power of Raphael? Turn your thoughts back, for a moment, upon the appearance of witnesses at the bar in court. You have generally seen them hesitating upon things which passed before their very eyes, entirely unable to recall some circumstances, and occasionally conflicting directly with the testimony of others. It is surprising how much they forget in a short time,—how vague and uncertain they are in what they recollect. Now, there is no limit to the extent to which our faculties may be cultivated in their memory, as well as other offices. When, therefore, we see a witness pass from the stand after a perplexed and hesitating testimony,—painful to his own feelings, and shedding little light upon the cause on trial,—when he, with a good memory, could have decided it justly, it becomes us to reflect, that this man's want of thorough teaching left his memory in such a condition.

Let us pass from the memory to the judgment. Of all the functions of our faculties, this is certainly one of the most decisive of our welfare,—the guardian of our interests. Every one must decide by it the great question as to his pursuit in life, so as to secure his own best interests and be most useful to others, and also, to choose the best from the thousand ways of prosecuting it. The impartial exercise of the judgment in all cases, is the true secret of that precious talent,—precious above genius and above learning,—good sense. There is not

one of us, but is obliged daily to stake important interests upon our judgment, in reference to the proper course of conduct to pursue in our duties. We are continually, indeed, influenced by the opinions of others. We catch the slavish spirit, from a consciousness of the unsoundness of our judgments,—from its frequent mistakes, and we make these mistakes,—feel this defect on account of our previous faulty education ; not being taught thoroughly, so as to ascertain with sufficient care, and weigh with sufficient accuracy, the various circumstances bearing upon a case. How many errors have we fallen into, affecting our most important transactions and our highest interests, from precipitation in deciding before thorough consideration,—heedlessness in letting *trifling* circumstances loom up into importance, and giving too little weight to others. It is not altogether strange, then, that we depend upon others for our opinions and decisions so slavishly, although, when we beg them, we incur the danger and injury of the mistakes of our patrons in judgment. Who would not avoid, as a moral pestilence, having himself, or causing or allowing his son or pupil to have a dependent mind, incapable of coming to a rational conclusion for itself? And, indeed, as judgment is one of the most important functions of our faculties, so, fortunately,—so, let me rather say, providentially,—it is one of the most improvable by education. To what end, indeed, did the Creator set before us such an innumerable multitude of cases, constantly requiring a decisive judgment, except to give opportunity,—in fact, security,—for the continual advancement of our minds towards perfection in this noble exercise. How much, then, may a youthful mind be improved in judgment by a teacher, who, thus having constant opportunities of doing it, is on the alert to use them for this purpose. Thorough teaching, as I have described it, will inevitably lead the child to this important decision of judgment,—always to accomplish duties in the season allotted to them ;—a decision which once firmly come to,

and ratified by habit, is worth a year's education, and bought cheaply at that price.

A cheap, interesting and most salutary exercise of judgment for pupils, may be effected by calling upon them, as has been recommended, for definitions of words and phrases occurring in their reading and recitations. Their signification in general, and that which they have in the connexion in which they are found, may be judged of with great benefit to the reasoning powers, and great improvement in knowledge. The methods before given, of managing recitations so as to rouse attention to the sense, and create a thirst for knowledge, are also modes of exercise in judgment. And whatever be the study assigned a scholar, when he knows it must be accomplished, he will soon be led to the exercise of a sound discretion to determine the best mode of execution. The innumerable efforts of reason a youth may make in school, are forming him well or ill,—as he is educated to use them,—for the great duties of life. If, on leaving the school, he be able to judge actively and accurately, so that in a controversy of his own or others, he can, from the evidence, conclude firmly, and for good reason, which is the best cause,—can see justly where lies the wisdom or folly of any thing said or done; or, especially, in business, industriously applies his mind, till it fixes upon the best out of the various ways of effecting his purpose; a judgment thus used to activity and justice in decision, is of infinitely more value to its possessor, than the poor boast of saying, that he has studied all the books that have descended to us from Greece and Rome,—all the mathematics ever investigated, all history, all poetry, all philosophy.

If a sound judgment upon our purposes and plans for executing them be the very guiding and preserving power of God within us, how essential is it, also, to have a mind full of resources, always ready with worthy objects of pursuit, and of methods adapted to gain them! Can education bear such golden fruit

as this? It may. Let boys be thoroughly educated, and they will have the habit of steady application of mind to any duty before them,—will soon see clearly what is to be done,—will remember those portions of their experience applicable to the case,—will discover by imagination, ways in which those treasured gems of knowledge must be reset, and what added to give the effect desired, and will finally judge with precision of the best of these methods. I consider a mechanic, full of suitable means to accomplish his purposes, a man of fine practical imagination as well as judgment, and fully believe in the great assistance education may render nature in rearing such an one. Washington's letters exhibit him both in common cases and emergencies, as never at a loss for a plan, and as an accurate prophet of the results of actions and events,—of close attention, full memory, noble imagination, and judgments decisively correct.

You have the amount of what I wished to say upon thorough teaching. I do not pretend to entire originality, by any means, in these practical suggestions, but if each teacher describe his own course, we shall soonest arrive at wisdom in our profession, and those things which one may know, another may not know. Do I, in my views, which contain my practice, ask too much of the teachers? It is a great deal, I know, for him to leave his little leisure, and sweet home, and be at the school-house, both before and after the regular time,—to be self-controlled, vigilant, and forcible with pupils, so that their intellectual labors may not only be judiciously laid out, but the performance of them fully secured. It is a great thing, to bring out in full and fair development, the faculties of a child, much more of a school. But a teacher who feels a true professional enterprise, will not go murmuringly or grudgingly to the discharge of his duties, but, investing his whole capital of body and mind in his noble pursuit, he will set no bounds to his interest in teaching, and none to his efforts; and he will be

rewarded, I firmly believe, both by the happiness he will find in a calling so absorbing to him, and by the support he will receive from the community, who, if sometimes mistaken, generally judge correctly, and will sustain an earnest laborer in their behalf.

**LECTURE III.**

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**ON**

**“THE HOUSE I LIVE IN.”**

**By WILLIAM A. ALCOTT.**



## THE HOUSE I LIVE IN.

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No building,—however ancient, however elegant, however costly,—concerns me so much as the house I live in. And yet, unless I am constantly urged, nay, driven to the task, I am disposed to overlook it, and to study the structure, arrangements, regulations, internal economy, and ultimate objects of every other building in preference. Fortunately for my own happiness, and not less so for the happiness of those around me,—since their happiness must always, in a measure, rise or fall with my own,—I *am* thus urged,—thus compelled to withdraw my thoughts from traversing other climes, plunging into distant and remote habitations, and reading suns and stars, and to fix them on this humble, but at the same time fearful and wonderful dwelling. Every want I feel, every pang I endure, every imperfection I find in the frame, the covering or the furniture, every symptom of decay I perceive in either, reminds me that I have left undone something which should have been done, or done something which ought not to have *been* done, and that I am now receiving, in my own person, a just measure of punishment for the transgression.

This concession of guilt may strike some individuals as uncalled for. Such a thing has certainly been known, I shall be told, as the confession of faults by one who was entirely

innocent. But such confessions are usually extorted by fear, from the timid or inexperienced. On the contrary, my confessions are voluntary,—the result of many years' observation and experience.

Let me not be understood as representing, that my own errors are the sole cause of every want or pang I feel, and of every defect; but only that none of these are ever felt, or ever exist, to which my own errors and mistakes have not greatly contributed; if they have not been,—which I believe has sometimes happened,—their sole origin.

My whole life consists of a struggle to sustain the house I live in, and prevent its destruction. Like other material substances, it is subject to the law of gravitation, and such is its peculiar structure, that were it not constantly and vigorously supported by the efforts of every moment, during my waking hours, it would fall to the earth. All the streams that run through its various apartments, would also pour their congregated flood into the lower apartments, and there remain. Why should they not? By what law is it, that these numerous rivulets are continually pursuing their course, up hill as well as down hill, for seventy, eighty or a hundred years, when the laws of gravitation are continually forcing every surrounding stream, on which my eye rests, downward? Let this struggle which I am constantly sustaining in my frame, against gravitation and the mechanical laws, cease, but for one short hour, and the house in which I reside, forsaken in its upper apartments by every fountain that once flowed there, would soon fall to the earth tenantless, and useless to others.

All the fluids in our atmosphere, if left free to the action of air, light and heat, are constantly evaporating; and five sixths of the material of the house in which I reside, are subject to this law of evaporation. Now, if I withhold my efforts to sustain the house, but for an hour, it is injured; and in a few hours, or at most a day or two, destroyed. I must even continue,—and do continue,—the struggle, to a certain extent, while I

sleep. In the midst of a temperature of  $20^{\circ}$  below zero, I am also obliged to struggle, or the frost would shiver every one of my timbers, and, in half an hour, leave my mansion tenantless and wretched.

Once more, there is a perpetual tendency of the whole frame-work, covering and furniture, to yield to the chemical laws. If I do not resist most manfully, by the vital forces placed at my command within, both in my waking and sleeping hours,—if the struggle is intermitted but for a few minutes,—a change commences; fermentation, putrefaction, decomposition, ensue; and the fabric is destroyed for ever. “The dust returns to dust as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”

Now, the application of all this to the case before us is as follows:—Just in proportion to the energy with which I maintain this struggle,—just in proportion to the exactness with which I obey all the laws of God, as established in this frame,—just in the same proportion is its duration and usefulness. I have said, that if I neglect the conflict but for a short time,—an hour or a day, as the case may be,—all goes to decay, if not to destruction. The fact is, that if I am guilty of neglect, but for the twinkling of an eye, mischief is done. You ask, perhaps, how I can watch and struggle while I sleep? Does not the skilful defender of a fort against its besiegers, maintain the conflict for days,—often with success,—though yielding, for a few hours, occasionally, to an imperative demand, he solicits the aid of “nature’s sweet restorer,—balmy sleep?” In fact, this is one of the necessary means of keeping up the struggle. He *must* sleep, at times, and so must his men. But, if his army is well disciplined, and its numbers sufficient, it is easy to make such arrangements, that the defence shall continue, though a part of his forces, and even himself sleep. While I sleep, therefore,—if every previous, necessary arrangement is made,—the struggle can go on as well as if I were awake; and, in the end, far better.

But every thing pertaining to the building must be regarded. It is not sufficient that I pay close attention to the frame, while I neglect the covering and the furniture; or, that I attend to either of the latter, while I forget the others. Resistance to the surrounding natural laws must be made at every point, as well as at all times and seasons. Now, it should be my object to resist manfully against the foes which are perpetually tending to demolish my tenement. Every point should be guarded with the utmost strictness, as a point of danger. The least neglect to watch will not only expose to invasion, but provoke invasion.

Every part of the frame should be kept in the best possible condition. If a single brace is wanting in firmness, the injury is gradually propagated through every part of the frame, and the whole feels it. If a single brace or spar is misplaced, the whole is injured in like manner. It is as true of the frame of the house I live in, as it is any where else, that if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.

But if a slight injury or defect in the matter of braces and spars is not a serious defect, in itself, but an injury which is communicable to other parts of the frame, how much more serious are the consequences of defect in the larger and more important portions,—the joints, the posts, and the pillars! And yet, if I have passed my years of school life, without these latter injuries, I am one of a thousand. If the main support of this fearful and wonderful frame,—the spine,—be not more or less crooked or misplaced, or if none of my joints are in any way injured, then my lot is singularly happy. Few thanks in such a case are, however, due to the school-house, or its furniture, or the methods of instruction.

But if I *am* a sufferer in this respect, it is not the particular injured portion of my frame alone, that suffers, but the whole; and not only the whole frame, but the covering,—yes, and the furniture: and not these alone, but all the processes and purposes for which this furniture is employed and intended.

I here repeat the general principle, for it is a great and important truth ; and as I said before, is nearly as applicable to the house which I at present inhabit, as it was to the purpose for which it was primarily intended by the apostle ; that, " whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."

Would that this principle were as well applied, as it is understood and admitted ! Would that I made it a part of the business of each passing hour, to attend to, and keep in repair, and render as perfect as possible, not only the whole of my system, *as a whole*, but every part of it !—And O, that I could have been so instructed, so educated, in the family, in the school, in the church, *every where*, that I might never have overlooked, as I have done for weeks, and months, and years together, this whole matter ! I do not mean to say, that it was then necessary, or is still necessary, that I should stop and *reason* at every step. It were far better to form habits, in early education, which should involve, as a matter of course, a due share of attention to this subject. There is no more difficulty, in the nature of things, of promoting at our every step, and without reflection, the well-being of our frames, than of injuring them. How happy will be that age of the world, —a truly *golden age*,—when this body, designed to be a temple of the Spirit of God, shall be as happily adapted to its legitimate purpose, as it now is to the purpose for which it is too generally employed,—that of preparing its inhabitant to be more and more miserable, at every successive step of his existence, and most heartily rejoiced, when he can get fairly and honorably out of it !

It may, and undoubtedly will be said, " You make too much of the mere house of the soul. Of what consequence is a frail tenement, when we are destined to reside in it so short a time ? Who hath required it of mere tenants, to devote a considerable portion of their thoughts to the dwelling, which at best they can occupy a hundred years, and from which they

are liable to be ejected by the landlord at any hour, and without a moment's warning? If we were the real owners of our dwellings, or we had even a lease of them,—were it but for one year,—the whole case, we are told, would be altered. Or if we cou'd leave them to our children, or to our friends, even this would afford us some little encouragement in the work of preserving them from decay, and prolonging their existence. But, as things now are, what solitary motive can we have for exertion? It is in vain for you to plead the cause you do,—it is in vain to dissuade from the universal practice of slighting the hovel, as beneath our care,—unless you can present us motives for not doing so. Or if there were existing motives at all, they would only apply to the case of infancy, ere the house has been injured or its uses perverted."

I reply, in the first place, that for myself, *I* find ample motives to a work of this kind. Were I to be turned out of doors the next hour, it would be wise in me to render myself happy while I remain. It sometimes surprises me, to hear it brought as an argument against rendering myself comfortable in a ship, a dwelling, a shop,—in any thing or any where,—because I am to stay there for a short time only. Happiness depends, in no small measure, on the disposition or temper; and the temper depends very much on outward circumstances. If this be true, it follows, of course, that my happiness is very closely connected with the comfortable condition of the tenement in which I dwell. But if my happiness is dependent on my outward circumstances, during a hundred years of exposure to those circumstances, it is so during any part of a hundred years, even one day. It is, therefore, I say again, impossible for me to understand how it is so many content themselves by living quietly in a miserable house, when their only earthly excuse is, that they have only a little while to stay in it.

Secondly, it is not true, in the sense in which the phrase is commonly used, that we are thus liable to be turned out of doors. The dwelling is leased to us during life, and that life

may, as a general rule, be prolonged a hundred years,—we know not how much more. The general rule is, that it shall last a long period;—and when we find it going to decay, at an early period,—at the end of a day, a month, a year, ten, twenty, or forty years,—we may be sure there is error somewhere, usually in the management of him who inhabits it. I say, therefore, with more distinctness than before, that there is no reason derived from the *structure* of the house the soul lives in, why it should not last a hundred years; or, were it not for the testimony of human experience, a much greater period. And even the testimony of human experience is of little consequence, in determining the point, because every dwelling of every soul of man has been hitherto injured, and made to tend towards decay, from the earliest to the latest period of its existence. So that, when I am told it is of no use to endeavor to render this tenement as perfect as possible, since I know not how long I shall inhabit it, I reply, that the conclusion is incorrect, because founded on the presumption, that I am the miserable slave of a capricious landlord; whereas the truth is, that this same landlord has not only given me a life lease of the tenement, but also the power of prolonging the duration of that tenement, in a degree which shall always bear a just and exact proportion to my own efforts.

Thirdly, it is said, that if any thing can be done in the way proposed, it is only, or at least chiefly, during the earliest part of life,—the short period of infancy. But if this were granted, it only enhances the importance of effort. “The activity of childhood,” said an able writer of seventy years ago,\* “is given it for the wisest purposes, as it has more to do and to learn in the first three years of life, than it ever has in thirty years of any future period;” and nothing can be more true. It is, moreover, equally true, that more can be done in the way of prolonging the duration, and increasing the comfort of the

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\* Dr. Gregory, of Edinburgh.

are liable to be ejected by the landlord at any hour, and without a moment's warning? If we were the real owners of our dwellings, or we had even a lease of them,—were it but for one year,—the whole case, we are told, would be altered. Or if we could leave them to our children, or to our friends, even this would afford us some little encouragement in the work of preserving them from decay, and prolonging their existence. But, as things now are, what solitary motive can we have for exertion? It is in vain for you to plead the cause you do,—it is in vain to dissuade from the universal practice of slighting the hovel, as beneath our care,—unless you can present us motives for not doing so. Or if there were existing motives at all, they would only apply to the case of infancy, ere the house has been injured or its uses perverted.”

I reply, in the first place, that for myself, *I* find ample motives to a work of this kind. Were I to be turned out of doors the next hour, it would be wise in me to render myself happy while I remain. It sometimes surprises me, to hear it brought as an argument against rendering myself comfortable in a ship, a dwelling, a shop,—in any thing or any where,—because I am to stay there for a short time only. Happiness depends, in no small measure, on the disposition or temper; and the temper depends very much on outward circumstances. If this be true, it follows, of course, that my happiness is very closely connected with the comfortable condition of the tenement in which I dwell. But if my happiness is dependent on my outward circumstances, during a hundred years of exposure to those circumstances, it is so during any part of a hundred years, even one day. It is, therefore, I say again, impossible for me to understand how it is so many content themselves by living quietly in a miserable house, when their only earthly excuse is, that they have only a little while to stay in it.

Secondly, it is not true, in the sense in which the phrase is commonly used, that we are thus liable to be turned out of doors. The dwelling is leased to us during life, and that life

may, as a general rule, be prolonged a hundred years,—we know not how much more. The general rule is, that it shall last a long period;—and when we find it going to decay, at an early period,—at the end of a day, a month, a year, ten, twenty, or forty years,—we may be sure there is error somewhere, usually in the management of him who inhabits it. I say, therefore, with more distinctness than before, that there is no reason derived from the *structure* of the house the soul lives in, why it should not last a hundred years; or, were it not for the testimony of human experience, a much greater period. And even the testimony of human experience is of little consequence, in determining the point, because every dwelling of every soul of man has been hitherto injured, and made to tend towards decay, from the earliest to the latest period of its existence. So that, when I am told it is of no use to endeavor to render this tenement as perfect as possible, since I know not how long I shall inhabit it, I reply, that the conclusion is incorrect, because founded on the presumption, that I am the miserable slave of a capricious landlord; whereas the truth is, that this same landlord has not only given me a life lease of the tenement, but also the power of prolonging the duration of that tenement, in a degree which shall always bear a just and exact proportion to my own efforts.

Thirdly, it is said, that if any thing can be done in the way proposed, it is only, or at least chiefly, during the earliest part of life,—the short period of infancy. But if this were granted, it only enhances the importance of effort. “The activity of childhood,” said an able writer of seventy years ago,\* “is given it for the wisest purposes, as it has more to do and to learn in the first three years of life, than it ever has in thirty years of any future period;” and nothing can be more true. It is, moreover, equally true, that more can be done in the way of prolonging the duration, and increasing the comfort of the

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\* Dr. Gregory, of Edinburgh.

soul's habitation, during the first three years of its existence, than during any thirty subsequent years.

Finally, it is not true that I insist on an increased attention to the house I live in, merely for the *sake* of the house; though this seems to constitute the whole force of the objection. It is only, or at least chiefly, because it is the habitation of an immortal spirit, and because that spirit is, and must be affected, more or less, by the *character* of the habitation. I repeat the sentiment. Not only the anatomy and the physiology,—if I may be allowed to use such language,—but even the psychology, pathology and history, the structure, nature, diseases and destiny, of the human soul, must be forever modified, in no small degree, by the structure, character and other properties of the tenement, to which, for the time being, it is attached, and with which for so long a period, but especially for a few of its first years, it is so intimately connected. It is not necessary, perhaps, to go the length of Professor Caldwell, of the Transylvania University, in his Thoughts on Physical Education, and affirm that “all the beneficial effects of training arise from the improvements produced by it in organized matter, rendering such matter, whether it be brain, nerve, muscle, lungs, or of any other description, a better piece of machinery for mind to work with.” That is, I am not driven to affirm that the soul is not susceptible of improvement, except through the improvement of the dwelling it inhabits. This opinion may, or may not, be true; and this too, perhaps, without justly exposing him who either holds or rejects it, to the charge of materialism. But it is enough, for my present purpose, if I show that instead of slighting the hovel as beneath my care, it should be studied and improved, to an extent which, in no instance, has ever yet been realized, and to which it is vain to hope mankind will go, till they are roused to the importance and necessity of the subject.

We must return to primitive apostolic ground. We must seek to present the whole being, body and soul, a sacrifice to

God, as a most reasonable and acceptable service. We must seek to purify,—sanctify,—body and soul. We must remember that the body is, indeed, the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that whoso defiles, or despises, or even overlooks this temple, knows not what he does. God has, in his infinite wisdom, united the body and the soul, the spirit and its temple, the house and its inhabitant;—and “what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

It is also objected to the doctrines of this essay, that we lay down no *rules* to be observed, in rearing and perfecting the habitation of the soul. That all is left at loose ends,—a matter of mere hap-hazard.

This is not only a grave charge, but it seems to have acquired gravity by its age. It happens, however, that it has acquired no truth from its age. It is just as false as it was two thousand years ago, and is,—for any thing I can discover,—just about as often a plea for indolence, or an apology for sheer ignorance.

Every one who has paid the least attention to ordinary architecture, knows that it is in no respect a matter of hap-hazard, but that the architect is governed at every step by rules, whether in the construction of the simplest or the rudest edifice. Those rules are, in many instances, perfectly plain. We see the architect at the foundation. There are a thousand varieties of soil ; and, when it is left for him to decide, we see him making his selection. We see him preparing the material. There are many varieties of wood, brick and stone ; and we see him busily employed in selecting the best of its kind. There are numerous plans or models, from which to select, and here, too, we see him busy in the selection.

In like manner does God require it at our hands, to be governed by rules, in the erection of a habitation for the human soul. I have already insisted, that the habitation depends for its perfection, almost entirely, on him who inhabits it, and those who are his coadjutors. In answer to the objection, that

give way in one part or another; and, frequently, in such a manner that repairs seem indispensable,—repairs, too, beyond the supposed power of the builder. It is, then, for the first time, that enlightened aid is seriously thought of; but even now it is not decided on, without first sitting down grudgingly, and counting the cost;—sometimes, however, before the cost is fairly counted, the whole is a complete wreck,—the walls, and even the foundation itself gone for ever. Indeed, it usually happens that the more ignorant the owner of the house and his friends are, and the less pains are taken at the foundation, the more frequently do repairs become necessary, and the oftener are those repairs rendered irremediable by delay. One half of the human souls for whom houses are commenced, are stripped for ever of their earthly shelter, ere it is half finished. And the mystery of mysteries in regard to the whole matter is, that experience in this respect does not teach wisdom. Though warned again and again of the necessity of laying a better foundation,—of informing myself more effectually, of calling in good and valuable aid in doing the first works, instead of waiting till the walls begin to tumble,—I am still inclined to go on in my own careless manner; perhaps, because such has, time out of mind, been the custom; for surely there is no better reason to be found.

So common, indeed, is this error, even among an economical and parsimonious people, that you will seldom,—I might say never,—find a person who does not fall into it; and this, too, notwithstanding the fact that a numerous profession is at hand, who have made this species of architecture their whole study. These men, by thousands, are daily and hourly employed in our country in *mending*, when they are far better qualified to prevent the necessity of mending; and when a given amount of effort expended in the latter way would accomplish three times as much good, as well as be found three times as agreeable. It is by no means pleasant to have our house frequently falling about our ears, to say nothing of the misery of living in

perpetual fear, apprehension and horror. Why not expend one hour of time, or one dollar of money to-day, in preference to reducing ourselves to the pitiable necessity of spending twice the time, and three times the money to-morrow? Perhaps it would be difficult to answer this question, without incurring the guilt of self-condemnation, and the charge of egregious folly. Here, if no where else, the children of this world are not very wise, though it should be admitted that they are wiser than the children of light.

To a reflecting mind, nothing can be more painful than the foregoing considerations, with others of the same family. To see so much talent and money, and what is incomparably more valuable than either,—I mean precious time,—thrown away in patching up an old or tottering edifice, instead of erecting a good one in the first place; to know, at the same time, that nothing but credulity and ignorance preclude a better state of things; and yet, to see this sad state of things increasing every hour, how can it otherwise than elicit the most painful emotions?

We should not forget, in the way, that the miserable tenant of a miserable and falling house is by no means happy during his best and most quiet hours,—I mean, admitting he is; for the time, free from apprehensions of immediate danger. His happiest hours would be incomparably *more* happy in a better and firmer tenement. Nor should it be forgotten, that there is danger in making repairs, though the artist employed for the purpose should be ever so skilful. A sound part of the wall or ceiling may be injured in mending the old defect; or even the whole, or at least, a considerable part of the whole tenement be weakened.

May we not, hence, see the necessity of removing the veil of ignorance which now hangs over the human soul, in regard to the nature and structure of the house it inhabits? Should not every one be taught, from earliest infancy, this species of

architecture? And, until this is effected, can there be any considerable improvement of our social and moral condition?

RULE 4. *We must persevere in our efforts.* It is not sufficient that I work well to-day, and remit my efforts to-morrow. It is true, that to-day is worth more than to-morrow,—far more so,—for, as I have elsewhere shown, three years at the foundation are worth more than thirty years on the superstructure. Still, no later period is to be neglected. To lie still to-morrow will never repair the neglects or defects of to-day, nor can we perform to-morrow any works of supererogation to apply to the days gone-by.

The house I live in differs in some respects from ordinary buildings. Those do not usually begin to decay, or require renovation, till they are fairly completed. But this dwelling, on the contrary, begins to crumble away as soon as I, or others, begin to build. This continual crumbling or wasting, while it prolongs, perhaps, the whole period of labor in erecting it, affords some advantages. If a portion of the wall has been badly laid, or laid with an inferior material, an opportunity is thus afforded for replacing it with better material and in a better manner. This waste of old material and supply of new is so great, that, during the whole progress of building, two or three times the amount of material is used, which would be requisite to form the structure. At the present moment, the house I occupy, does not, probably, contain a single particle of material, which it contained twelve or fourteen years ago. I repeat it, therefore, that this circumstance, though it causes an increase of labor, is not without its advantages. It calls, in particular, for an increase of diligence and perseverance in our efforts, not only at the commencement, but at every stage of our progress.

RULE 5. *Great wisdom is necessary in the selection of appropriate materials.* In ordinary buildings, men do not heap together indiscriminately whatever comes in their way.

Nor do they go upon the principle, that as God has made nothing in vain, whatever exists, of whose use they are in utter ignorance, must have been created for their purpose as builders. Neither are they ever heard to say, that such or such a material is adapted to their purpose, simply because, in the prosecution of their labors, it will do no harm. To be useful to them, it must have something more than merely negative properties or qualities, and it must not only be positively useful, but the best which under the circumstances they can procure.

Such, however, is not the wisdom of those who build the more important human habitation ; the temple of the immortal spirit. Very justly, therefore, was it once laid down as a general rule, that "the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light." We, who, as builders of the house the soul lives in, ought to apply ourselves with special wisdom in this matter, use, in the selection of our material, little or none even, of that common sense which God has given us. We usually collect such as custom has determined, or as convenience has thrown in our way, and let it pass. These things, my countrymen, ought not so to be.

I should be glad to enter upon a particular description of the best materials, as well as of the best method of "working them up." But the limits allowed me forbid this, and instead of going into particulars, I must content myself with general statements.

Not only should great care be used in the selection of materials, properly so called, but in many other points of importance, connected both with the foundation and the superstructure.

Cleanliness is indispensable. The Romans had a maxim, *intus vino, extus oleo*. But neither oil without nor wine within will subserve the best ends of the house I live in, however it may have been with the habitation of the human soul two thousand years ago. Water is far better, both inside and out,

and should be applied at a suitable temperature to all the walls daily. No alcoholic or oily substances are at all necessary, or even admissible, except in those cases where repairs have become necessary. Simple, however, as water is, very great care is necessary in its application, both externally and internally,—or even this may do infinite mischief.

Purity of the air is requisite. It may, perhaps, be deemed unnecessary to speak of the importance of pure air. Every one knows how soon even the whited walls of an apartment are tarnished by the presence of atmospheric impurities. But it seems not so well understood,—at least not so well acted upon,—that the house itself cannot long stand, if it be not frequently and thoroughly ventilated. Its temperature is of far less consequence than the purity of the atmospheric air which comes in contact with it,—both without and within.

These, then, are a few plain rules, to be applied to the case before us. Though simple, and as I trust sufficiently explained and illustrated, they are exceedingly broad in their extent. Many others of minor importance might be added, but they seem to me uncalled for on the present occasion.

Shall I still be told, that these rules do not cover the whole ground; and that explanations more in detail, and far more specific are wanted? I reply, it can hardly be expected that five or six simple rules are sufficient for every purpose. Still, I think they include a great many more particulars than appear at first view. Let but the general rules here laid down, be duly regarded, and let them be applied to individual cases with that plain, practical good sense, which people are accustomed to use in other matters, and a reformation will have commenced, which will produce not only a greater change, but a greater improvement in human affairs than the world has yet seen.

Another objection, brought by those who are averse to the examination and study of the human habitation is, that the

rules which are laid down, and the instructions given, are so discordant, that to discover the truth is impossible. "Who shall decide," say they, "when doctors disagree?"

The same lazy objection has been made a thousand times, and with quite as good reason, against the study of the truths which relate to the soul. The book, which the Creator has furnished as a guide, it is said, teaches any thing and every thing. Who shall decide which is truth?

Now, when those who wish to understand the nature, character and destiny, either of the soul or the house it inhabits, shall have made themselves fully acquainted with all the doctrines, in regard to which our public instructors are generally agreed, and when they shall have formed their daily habits of thinking, feeling and acting on this basis, it will then be time, —and not until then,—to stumble at those about which they differ. I have already laid down, in this essay, several rules, in regard to which, I presume there will be found no difference of opinion among those who have at all investigated the subject; the persons, I mean, to whom the community have a right to look for information, or rather as guides to their own inquiries. A multitude of particular rules are equally plain and undoubted; and have never, to my knowledge, been questioned by the intelligent.

It is said, there are no books which can be relied on for information. Now, to meet this objection, would be but to repeat what has already been said. There are many excellent books on this subject, and though they embrace a few opinions on which doctors differ, they yet contain so much in regard to which they *all* agree, that none need to complain. When the incontroverted truths which these excellent volumes contain, shall be generally received and reduced to practice in the community, there will be much more reason, than now, to complain of their scarcity. There is, at least, one book, many of whose pages are always open before us; I mean the human frame itself. With this, alone, as a text-book, and a little previous

reading of other authors, much, very much, may be done, as has already been demonstrated, by experiment.

Lastly, and after every other objection has been met and refuted, we complain that we have no time. "I have so many other employments."—"My time is so constantly taken up, that I cannot attend to it."—"I acknowledge the importance of the study you mention, and I should like to pursue it, but I am so much engaged."—"I would pursue it, if I had time." These, and a thousand other excuses of nearly the same import, are perpetually urged, whenever we press the claims of the house the soul lives in.

There may be a few individuals in the community, who really have not time to pursue a new subject, were it ever so important, or attended with ever so few difficulties. Such are those who are enslaved, or what is little better than enslaved, to cruel masters,—no matter whether those masters bear the name of master, or only that of husband, parent, teacher, overseer, or employer. There are a few,—in this region they are scarce, however,—who know no other remission from toil, except to supply the demands of nature, the call for food, drink and sleep. Those at whose beck they go and come, and who are never satisfied unless they are busily engaged, every moment, in manual labor, may call them wife, child, apprentice, pupil, laborer, any thing they please; but if they give them no respite from incessant toil, and neither take measures, nor encourage measures taken by others, for improving their physical, social, intellectual or moral condition, they are as truly enslaved as human beings can be, and as much to be compassionated.

But those who, in this country, plead the want of time to attend to a subject which they acknowledge to be second in point of importance to nothing but the love of God itself, are not generally of this number. They are oftener of those who are glad of any plea for indolence, or for the more immediate gratification of their appetites, or their unholy passions. There are few among us who are condemned either directly or indirectly, to labor sixteen hours a day.

The farmer does not labor more than eight hours a day, taking one day with another, throughout the year; the mechanic,—him, I mean, who is not a slave,—labors more, perhaps ten; the manufacturer, perhaps twelve. Now, none of these classes,—and these are supposed to be longest confined by their respective occupations,—require more than ten hours for meals and sleep. What becomes of their leisure time,—the farmer's six hours, the mechanic's four, the manufacturer's two? Can nothing be done in these? No time! when I have two, four, six hours at my command?

No time! Has God, then, appointed me a habitation, and condemned me to total ignorance of its structure, laws, nature and destiny, by giving me no time to study them? Has he given me time to range the planetary world, and know something even of spots on the sun, meteoric stones, the milky-way, the great bear, the little bear, comets' tails, Saturn's ring, and Jupiter's moons;—to explore the atmosphere of our globe, as well as penetrate the depths of sea and land, and know the contents and elements of each; to dive into the still deeper arcana of nature, and ascertain the laws by which tides, trade-winds, lightning, earthquakes and volcanoes are produced, as well as those by virtue of which a stone falls down rather than up, and the magnetic needle points to or departs from the poles,—has he given me time, I say, for all this, and have no years, nor months, nor even a solitary day been allotted me, to explore this master-piece of the Divine Architect, pronounced by its Author, to be wonderfully made and curiously wrought;—a temple fitted up and gloriously garnished for the residence of an immortal inhabitant, bearing God's own image?

No time! Am I then permitted to study the geography of every part of our globe,—the history, laws, manners and customs of the countless tribes that animate it, even of the human race;—to investigate the dwellings of every tribe of creatures which God hath created, from the more enlightened

biped, to the meanest quadruped, and even the smallest insect ; and am to remain in utter darkness, like that of Egypt's fatal night, and in the most savage ignorance in regard to my own home ?

No time ! Have I, then, several hours of every day I live, to build up the political or civil fabric, and secure myself a comfortable apartment in it, with a snug salary, and have I not one solitary hour, to look to the internal economy of a dwelling which, if not regulated, would render me miserable, even in the chair of the chief magistrate ?

I have no time, then ! And yet I have time to spend in heaping up wealth, in preparing huge piles of wood, and brick, and stone in which to keep it, in employing men to handle it, to make massy locks to guard it, and prisons to confine intruders or counterfeiters. I have time enough for all this ; but, alas ! have I not a solitary moment to spend on a fabric, which may contain for a century or so, a treasure that neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and for which no thieves ever have yet been known to break through and steal ?

No time ! And yet I have time for every thing else which can be named. I have time to destroy this temple, whose structure I ought daily and hourly,—for the sake of its immortal inhabitant,—to perfect. I have spoken, repeatedly, of the importance of selecting materials for building. Now, instead of selecting the best, it would seem as if my intention had been to select the worst, and lest I should fail of effecting my purpose, actually to procure help in the work of destruction. My house is committed,—till nearly its whole shape and character are in effect determined,—to the hands of one whom I have kept as long as possible in profound ignorance on this subject ;\* and to occasional assistants who are no less ignorant,

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\* A gentleman, eighty-three years of age, in Dorchester, informed me but the other evening, that he went to a common or public school, in Dorchester, six years, into which no female was ever permitted to enter, except once a year to be publicly catechised.

but far less interested than herself. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," is as true now, as it was two thousand years ago, and in every step she takes, she verifies the truth of the statement. She employs inferior materials; and she renders these still worse by her modes of preparing them.

In short, it would frequently seem, as if her whole mission,—though her intentions be never so pure,—consisted in destroying instead of up-building. During the last half century she has very much deformed the edifice which her hands have guided and fashioned; and what was before but barely sufficient for the convenience of its occupant, she has reduced to nearly half its ordinary original dimensions, and rendered it very uncomfortable. A most important chamber is narrowed away to the shape,—and I had almost said the size,—of an inverted sugar loaf, with the prospect of narrowing it away still farther and farther during a century to come. And what is to be still more lamented, though her labors affect directly but half our race, they reach indirectly the *whole*, and deform the whole. In brief, then, instead of being a helper in the great work which is allotted her by her employer, her time, and strength, and talents, the world over, are devoted, to a considerable extent, to the work of a destroyer. Instead of performing the office of a ministering angel, she fulfils, unconsciously, no small part of the business of a demon, blighting, withering, cursing, where she goes, and whom, and what she loves and esteems.

In short, whole years of human life are spent, and with great cheerfulness, too, in grasping at things which are either useless or comparatively injurious, and not a few of them positively hurtful,—destructive of the body as well as of the soul. Yet when a claim is made,—yes, and the claim conceded,—on a small share only, of any efforts to accomplish that for which I am best fitted by my Creator to do, I am apt to shrink back, and to complain of a want of time. Strange perversion of the faculties which He hath given! Strange

perversion of a law which common sense, one would think, might long ere this have taught me!—

Let us change our whole course. Whether I am a father, a mother, a teacher, or any other builder, either of human character, or of the vehicle which is the outward sign or emblem of human character,—whether I am at home, at church, or at school,—let me rise from the state into which I have fallen, and build again the things which once, by my ignorance, I destroyed. Let it be my meat and drink to do the will of my Father who is in heaven, and in so doing, to employ a portion of every day which he shall henceforth give me, in endeavoring so to rear, and perfect, and adorn humanity, that it may be rendered a meet temple of Divinity. Let me do this as my most reasonable service, were this life all. But let me do it with still greater earnestness, from the conviction which I feel,—and which Revelation itself countenances,—that somehow or other a relation subsists, and will for ever subsist, between the temple of the present, and the temple of the future; and that while I am laboring to improve my present habitation, every step I take has a bearing on my well-being, when I shall have attained to that house which is “not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

**LECTURE IV.**

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**INCITEMENTS  
TO MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL  
WELL-DOING.**

**By J. HENSHAW BELCHER.**



## INCITEMENTS

TO

### MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL WELL-DOING.

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THE desire of happiness, however varied the ways and means of its attainment, if not the first, is one of the most powerful and prominent impulses in every living soul. For this, as an *ultimate* end, do we live, and act, and hope, and for this end must be the ground-work of education, as it is of every human pursuit. Thence arises the question, In what does this happiness, so universally desired, consist? It surely cannot be a chimera; for each person early experiences some joy, as a foretaste of it, by which a desire for the like is aroused. But we too often mistake the nature of happiness, deeming it peculiar to some outward condition. Whereas, wisdom assures us, that the bliss we seek, is not dependent on matter, time or space, but is entirely distinct from all else but the soul itself; or, if it may be so expressed, it is a gradual accretion of spiritual joys, resulting from deeds done agreeably to nature; and the foretaste alluded to, is the joy attendant, as a concomitant test, upon some early deed so done. And this first joy, as a component part, forms a nucleus, around which, as succeeding joys gather, a permanent happiness expands within the soul, like the forming crystal, into beauty and harmony.

Such being the elements of happiness, the first desire for it becomes soon resolved into that of the *well-doing* which results in it ; or, the rectitude which is most agreeable to nature.

What, then, is well-doing, or the rectitude which may result in the most enduring happiness, serve best our end, and be most agreeable to nature ?

This question we are to consider and decide for the pupils of our charge,—our younger brothers in the human family, not merely for this world, but for eternity. In aid of which considerations, we have three means of judgment :—The Bible,—Experience,—and the Human Constitution.

Of course, before an audience of Christians, I need not recount the familiar precepts of that divine legacy, the Bible, concerning well-doing. Upon this point, most happily, all understand alike, and agree, that this sacred volume makes well-doing to consist in the faithful discharge of three several duties :—to God,—our fellows,—and ourselves. Nor need I dwell less briefly upon the testimonies of Experience. The injunctions upon well-doing, by both ancient and modern philosophers, who had no other light than experience, are familiar to all, and you can easily recall their general import. And, if I could summon before you the shades of millions, who, successively have fallen self-immolated upon pyres of sensuality, crime, ambition or avarice, they would sigh forth a general assent to the expression of Junius, that “with a sound heart, one is better calculated for even worldly happiness, than if cursed with the abilities of a Mansfield.” “After long experience of the world,” adds this writer, “I affirm, before God, I never knew a rogue who was not unhappy.” Again, if the long train of now sainted philanthropists were congregated here to speak to us, they would all affirm, that the well-doing which to them proved most conducive to happiness, consisted in the suppression of passion, and the practice of the moral virtues ; or, in the sacred summary, “to do justly, to love mercy, and walk

humbly." I will now hasten to the testimony of a less common, though important witness in this question, the Constitution of our Being.

"Know thyself!" was of old, a favorite maxim in philosophy. It was inscribed upon the temple of Delphi, as a primary injunction to all who entered, and cannot fail to be eminently profitable to inquirers for the way of well-doing.

We have not time, however, to examine this last topic at length, nor would it be relevant to the subject. But, by enumerating, briefly, the evident characteristics of the impulses which influence us, as moral beings, we may probably form conjectures respecting the designed, relative rank, and natural uses of these impulses, and thereby derive aid in determining, not only what well-doing *abstractly* is, and the best education to effect it, but also what course will most *naturally* result in happiness; as the action or use for which any organization is purposely adapted, must not only be well-doing, but, likewise, most easy and permanently agreeable to the whole being.

There are, seemingly, in the constitution of man, two distinct kinds or sets of impulses, to which the being's self, the soul, is passive. One is the physical or animal, the other the moral or spiritual set; and these so distinct in their characteristics, as almost to warrant the assumption, as a fact, of their having two independent sources; or, of there really being, in our *human* constitution, two bodies,—a spiritual and a physical,—an inner, as well as an outer temple, animated and possessed by a common soul. But, be this as it may, the two kinds of impulses, are both inherent, and very different in nature. I will now attempt to define separately those of each set, as I conceive them to be.

It has seemed to me, that in the infancy of life, or, during the growth of the physical body, even till the twentieth year, the physical or animal impulses are chiefly predominant; and, as any one of them is exercised, it naturally becomes strengthened by that exercise, and soon tends, if unbalanced or

unchecked, toward an extreme or passion ; which, as a thought,

“ That makes each other thought its slave,”

then rules the soul, and sways its interests to the purposes of the body ; or should no particular impulse gain a precedence of power, but all alike be strong, then collectively, if not early counteracted, they fix the soul's associations and affections to physical concerns.

Besides these, I have said we find another set or kind, which are called the moral or spiritual impulses. These I must take the liberty, with some risk of being tedious, to define more minutely than the first, as I wish them to be understood differently from usual descriptions of them.

The spiritual impulses are more or less active in every individual,—are evidently as natural as the first, and a very necessary check to the animal nature,—a salutary guide to the will, and a due balance to the whole mind.

The first of these, is the abstract desire of happiness, or that into which it is necessarily resolved, the *practical* desire for well-doing.

The second is consciousness, which moves the soul to perceive its spiritual self and thoughts,—its being's end and aim ; as before it was called, by sensation, to know the nature and necessities of the body.

The next, or third, is conscience, which, like the magic watchman, taste, in the animal nature, when subjects or objects, opinions or actions, are offered as a mental food, gives an instinctive impression of their right or wrong tendency.

The fourth is benevolence, or *well-wishing*. This impulse, modified by an humble sense of human dependence, ever prompts fellow-beings to a quick sympathy, as members of one family, and links humanity as a brother band.

It is at first, like all the affections, confined chiefly to a narrow circle. But, as Pope beautifully expresses it,

The centre mov'd, a circle straight succeeds,  
Another still, and still another spreads.  
Friends, parents, neighbors, first it will embrace,  
Our country next, and next all human race.  
Wide, and more wide th' o'erflowing of the mind,  
Takes every creature in, of every kind.  
Earth smiles around, in boundless beauty dressed,  
And heaven reflects its image in his breast."

The fifth is a spiritual admiration, attendant upon the desire of rectitude and perfection. It is an admiration for all beauty, excellence or noble traits, wherever found ; and which, improved by other sentiments or knowledge, strengthens into wonder, adoration, veneration or reverence, according to the character of its object ; and prompts to praise, imitation or worship.

The last is curiosity,—a spiritual thirsting for mental aliment.

Such seem to me the inborn springs of human action ; which, of either kind, remain inert, till called forth or stimulated by necessity or education. If the analysis I have sketched of them, be correct, it is evident that one of the two sets of impulses alluded to, must be early chosen to be made supreme in rank ; for it is in the kingdom of the mind, as in a family or empire, some gradation of authority must be established among the different powers to effect any peace within, or harmony of outward action. Therefore, is it especially necessary, that one of the two otherwise conflicting sets of impulses in our nature should be confirmed as prime minister to the enthroned soul in a precedence of influence.

And can there be a doubt which of these sets should be trained to this office ? Which is best fitted to endure, calculated to incline the soul to the purpose for which it seems designed,—to lead it to the most stable happiness, and thereby entitle it to wear this crown of supremacy ? For a moment, let us reflect upon their distinctive traits. Both, indeed, like man and beast, are essential to each other, in their relative

sphere and functions. But how different are they in all their peculiar promptings!

One set seems exclusively selfish; the other of boundless social sympathies. One feeds and depends on food that perisheth; and goods, which as but one person can possess them at a time, cause strife in the getting; and when gotten, or much accumulated, cause pride on one side, and envy on the other. On the contrary, the second craves, and grows by, the bread of heaven,—truth, love and religion; goods which fade not, nor can perish; and which all can enjoy to any degree, like the light of day, without lessening in the least the common stock. One, in its very attributes and propensities, seems born to obey; and during the minority of the second set is easily made submissive to the regency of parents and tutors. The other seems as decidedly “born to command.” In short, one is ostensibly brutal; the other purely divine.

Thence, from the very distinctive tendencies of these impulses, I think none can dissent from the conclusion, that, whether with reference to this life solely, or the next, true *well-doing* must depend upon the supremacy of the spiritual impulses. Such, it seems to me, is the designed relative rank of these powers; and in no other condition can the mission of a human being be fulfilled. In no other state, can he act with permanent ease to himself, or moral benefit to his fellows; and if this relation of the two natures be established, and all the impulses of each harmoniously developed, he can only need the guidance of intellect, to insure increasing happiness and virtue within, and well-doing without.

But, as I have before said, we find the physical impulses, which, for the sake of the body's growth, are the earliest developed, chief in influence through the periods of infancy and pupilage, and fast tending to become “ruling passions:” and many are the victims of this fatal subjection. So many are there, alas! even in our own favored land, if we may judge by the disclosures of scenes in our large cities, that one

may say with Shakspeare, and without much fear of a *crowded* heart :

“ Give me the man  
That is not passion’s slave, and I will wear him  
In my heart’s core, ay, in my heart of hearts.”

And, indeed, it is seldom that one can be found, in whom the moral powers have a supremacy of influence ; nor can we expect any change for the future, till education be made to bear more immediately upon this point. I presume both parents and teachers generally indulge the idea, that the animal prevalence of youth may yield to years, as the toys of boyhood become superseded by more manly pursuits. But this is a fallacious trust, and however pleasing may be its attendant vivacity in the innocence of childhood, some direct means must be early used to prevent the rule of passion ; nor must parents indulge the belief, that, in the hour of need, experience will give an occasional check to inward riot, or that the moral nature, being more and more developed, may, in time, be able, of itself, to hold a due curb upon the animal nature. Such are but broken reeds to lean upon. Reforms from licentiousness through experience, do truly sometimes happen, when many evils follow closely upon early indulgence ; but the event in such cases is a mere chance.

The only way for any one, convinced that it is best the spiritual nature should prevail, is, to apply immediate means, in childhood, to suppress, gradually, the animal powers, and strengthen the spiritual in their place.

And how may this be effected ? This question brings me to our most important point,—the incitements to be used ; and first, what incitement or means, can suppress the early physical ascendancy, without detriment to the bodily health ?

To this, I answer, beginning early, and continuing steadily, a calm, kind, but decided discipline. This, in order at all to effect our purpose, must be based upon authority, and implicit obedience.

And further, the same course must be continued, unchanged, till habits of self-control are fixed, and a consideration of consequences induced, with an inclination to consult the spiritual impulses before action.

This discipline need only be begun early to be easily effected, especially if parents coöperate, and allow their children to remain long enough at the same school. But if a child have long continued passive to growing animal propensities, with neither spiritual nor intellectual strength to weigh the balance within, nor a check of authority from without, the young soul unused to denials, intoxicated with allurements, and indulged by parents, may have become obstinately wedded to physical objects. In such a case it will not only be hard to wean it,—to break asunder the gilded meshes of sensual bondage,—but be difficult to subject the wayward will to any other influence.

If such a pupil attend you, the traits indicative of this condition will be soon apparent in an ill-brooking of all restraint, and a passionate impatience of rebuke. Of course, you will expect some hard contests, particularly if the subject be a boy, to effect in him a due submission. Yet, this must be done, and I confidently echo the injunction of Mr. Abbot, "*You must make him obey!*" "Do it by mild means if you can; but, at any rate, in all direct commands, make him obey."

This point of discipline, the enforcing of obedience, I think, has been, of late years, in most of our schools, much neglected; and in its place a system of "love and reason" substituted. But one need only reflect upon the natural state of the infant mind from the cradle to ten or twelve years of age, before experience or education has given power to the intellect and spiritual affections, to perceive that the child, up to that period, can be but slightly controlled by these imperfect restraints.

It is to this new fashioned laxity of rule, that we may, in part, attribute, I think, much of the insubordination and riot,

yes, and even "Lynch law," which has crept into our schools and families, as well as pervaded like a pestilence our States.

Times were in England, Cowper tells us, and many, perhaps, with not yet "silvered crowns," can tell of the same with us, when,

"In colleges and halls in ancient days,  
When learning, virtue, piety and truth  
Were precious, and inculcated with care,  
There dwelt a sage called Discipline.  
His eye was meek and gentle, and a smile  
Played on his lips; and in his speech was heard  
Paternal sweetness, dignity and love.  
The occupation dearest to his heart,  
Was to encourage goodness.

Learning grew  
Beneath his care, a thriving, vigorous plant;  
The mind was well informed, the passions held  
Subordinate, and diligence was choice.  
His frown was full of terror, and his voice  
Shook the delinquent with such fits of awe,  
As left him not, till penitence had won  
Lost favor back again, and closed the breach.  
But Discipline, a faithful servant long,  
Declined at length, into the vale of years;  
A palsy struck his arm; his sparkling eye  
Was quenched in rheums of age, his voice unstrung,  
Grew tremulous, and moved derision more  
Than reverence in perverse, rebellious youth.  
So colleges and halls neglected much  
Their good old friend; and Discipline, at length  
O'erlooked and unemployed, fell sick and died.  
Then virtue fled. The schools became a scene  
Of solemn farce, where ignorance in stilts,  
His cap well-lined with logic not his own,  
With parrot tongue, performed the scholar's part:  
Then compromise had place, and scrutiny  
Became stone blind."

Some descendants of this old friend of good order and learning undoubtedly came over to our shores with the Pilgrims; but a

similar fate has almost extinguished the whole family. I by no means, however, would fully commend the old system of discipline; for it was too indiscriminate, and very subject to abuse. Indeed, not long since, in well-remembered days, the "oil of birch," throughout New England, was, like a modern panacea, thought to be not merely a remedy, but an infallible preventive, to be used once a week in families,—a quickening tonic to the intellect, and "the sovereign'st thing on earth" for inward evils.

There are, indeed, still left some practical advocates of the old severities, by whom, perhaps, like one of Hudibrastic celebrity:

"Some have been beaten till they know,  
What the cudgel's of, by the blow;  
Or kicked until they can tell whether  
A shoe be Spanish or neat leather."

Indeed, we have a recent example of this kind, in the renowned Swabian master, mentioned in Dr. Dick's late work, who, as was recorded by his usher, gave upwards of a hundred whippings per day, through a reign of half a century, besides sundry other penalties, such as standing on dried peas, holding the rod, kneeling on sharp billets of wood, &c. For my own part, I would avoid the extremes of both systems. I would not reform out the good with the bad of the old system, and lay aside the rod for the broken reed of compromise; nor would I use the rod but as a *last resort* in cases of intentional disrespect or obstinacy; and then would prefer it should be in private, in a calm state of both parties, accompanied with paternal admonitions, and appeals to conscience for confessions of error. To prevent prevarications, and the difficulty of detecting secret offences, I think it a good plan to have it understood, that if confession be made, the accustomed penalty may be mitigated; and that if not confessed, nor detected, the full penalty must fall on as many as may, at least, include the right one. This course need not often bring

much inconvenience to the innocent, if followed steadily ; and will aid much toward encouraging frankness in all, particularly if inadvertences are only admonished. To effect an habitual submission of the animal nature, which is the chief object of discipline, it would be well to have all penalties directed to the physical being, and all encouragements to the mental, such as privileges to read a book in school time, or a reading-right of a month in a school library, and the like.

There is one evil, much fostered by the "love-and-reason" systems, which I would here speak of. It is a frequent, forward, and often disrespectful obtrusion of youthful opinion. It is said that wise laws are directed with most force against the faults to which a people are most prone, and so should they be in schools. Now, it is obviously the tendency of political institutions, infecting the manners of old and young, to induce an extreme or abuse of liberty ; in action, passing to licentiousness, or radicalism ; and in speech, through free discussion, to mere vilifying disputations. To this we should have an eye, and so arrange a wholesome discipline, as to nip the propensity in the bud. Children will readily give opinions, and think them good answers to any query concerning faults, or studies, or the like, which you may propose to them, and be the more eager for such debates, in proportion as you indulge their eloquent pleas. But I think they should never be allowed more than a single, simple statement in any case. The requisite of the old Grecian school, that the pupil must not express an opinion, till after having been from two to five years an auditor, might, perhaps, do well with us. At any rate, at all times, the teacher's decision should be as a law to the pupil ; and, as with Pythagoras, it should be considered "a crime" to dispute it. This, some might fear would shackle young genius, and cramp the reasoning powers ; but there are always *proper* occasions enough, and many studies in schools, to afford a sufficient and much better daily exercise of reason ; nor should any parent regret, if a favorite son

should lack a little of the republican caucus spirit of wrangling; for, by this being checked, a son may, perhaps, be kept from shame, and the community certainly be saved from an addition to the many presumptuous striplings, whom, in politics, the several professions, and society, we often find obtruding their crudities in the place of sound sense and experience. Again, it will be found to conduce much toward good order, and may probably enlist the coöperation of pupils themselves, if they be early impressed with the objects of discipline. They should be instructed, that it is for the ultimate benefit of each individual, as well as for the more immediate convenience of the school and teacher; and that it is absolutely necessary for the purposes for which each and all are sent by their parents. But their regard for good order should not be limited to schools. Pupils should be impressed with the *principle*, that wherever they may be, at a concert, an exhibition, or in any society, if they would do as they would be done by, no one should indulge in any self-gratification, till sure it may not mar the enjoyment of others, nor interfere with the common objects of the assembly. Impressed with such views, pupils may not only be the more willingly controlled, and have an exercise in benevolence, but acquire *politeness*, which is one of the chief graces of social life.

In order to make discipline effective in the formation of good habits, we must depend less on the kind of penalties used, than on the manner of administering them. If this last be capricious, passionate or selfish, such emotions will be incited in the pupil; and neither present order sustained, nor good principles inculcated. But if the administration be calm, impartial, steady and decided, the most favorable results, both to pupils and teachers, may be expected. But, above all other considerations, allow me again to say, that for any permanent benefit to their children, parents should be especially urged to allow as few changes as possible in either the schools, teachers, or course of discipline to which they once subject them.

Every school has some peculiarity of plan ; and if a child be continually changing, there can be no chance for *any* habits but of fickleness to be formed, or any character at all to be confirmed.

Finally, the course of discipline I propose, should, and does offer many opportunities, in times of trouble, to call forth the spiritual nature, to incite through consciousness to reflection, and through conscience to self-crimination.

I have dwelt somewhat longer than I perhaps ought, on this first indirect incitement ; but discipline seeming to me the only means for our first object,—the suppression of the physical ascendancy,—I could not pass it, without noting something of the way in which it should be conducted.

I now come to the more direct incitements, intended to arouse and strengthen the spiritual impulses, while the physical are being suppressed.

The first I shall speak of, is that of *prizes*, which, though mostly addressed to intellectual efforts, yet, as an incitement, have a very moral bearing. By prizes, I mean all *secondary* inducements, whether flattering praise, certificates, medals, school-rank, parts, or other honors ; any of these, to incite at all to extra exertion, it seems to me, must be made not *merely* secondary, but chief and prominent to the pupil's attention ; and then, like any physical condiment, it must, through much use, soon become desired, not as a mere spicy seasoning, but as food itself ; and, if long continued, it will, probably, engender a morbid hankering for the like, which cannot easily be eradicated. There is, however, a natural desire for some occasional sign or token of commendation. There was, indeed, mentioned, in the enumeration of the spiritual affections, a natural admiration for the excellent. This not only prompts to praise excellence and aspire to it, but as an approval of our own adoption, makes us happy in the reception of praise ; and, by strengthening our confidence of being ourselves in the way to excellence, it strongly encourages to renewed

efforts. But, if this praise be in a higher degree, or more frequent than real merit demands, or in advance of deeds, it then becomes, as I have intimated, an ultimate end in itself, instead of a means; and fixes the natural admiration on self, instead of virtue. Thence ensue emulations, with all their attendant dissimulations, which form the bane of many breasts. Further, it is observed, that those who succeed in getting prizes at school, generally need a similar stimulus, but of a higher and higher degree, for all after efforts. Once fully established in the mind, this spirit attends one through the world; where, under the name of ambition, it is always found to be of the same species, an ever-restless demon, whether goading the heart of the statesman, the author, or the petty lord of a manor; in an Alexander, sighing for another world to conquer, or the vain girl who would reign the belle of a little coterie. Therefore, I would urge that great caution should always accompany the use, if used at all, of such a dangerous, though attractive and easily available incitement.

The object most early, frequently and preëminently held up to it, a youth will soon become most intent upon, and incline to adopt as "the ruling passion;" and when thus early adopted, whatever it may be,—wealth, honor, pleasure or moral worth,—the young soul will naturally pursue it with an ardor increasing with progress, insatiate with success. Such, I believe, are the tendencies and effects of all secondary prizes, when made prominently attractive to youth, as I have said they must be, to effect the object. I believe they must, in most cases, naturally enkindle either an avaricious desire for their pecuniary value, or a more unhallowed one for the exclusive honors they confer; that they will necessarily inflame the individual with a feverish jealousy, and infect others with pestilential envy. And further, they must, at best, divert the mind from more ennobling courses. Therefore, I feel persuaded to say, that all human prizes as *incitements*, should be entirely withheld.

You would now ask, I presume, if I advise no kind of prize, no indulgence of the natural desire of commendation. By no means. I would even advise the awarding of direct praise in moderate degrees, and for single efforts *finished*,—but never would I promise praise either of the lips, or by other tokens, as a prize, in advance of merit.

I would, however, promise, even in advance, and hold up to youth, *one prize*,—the highest, the noblest of all prizes,—that for which they ask from the cradle to the grave,—*INWARD HAPPINESS*,—the germ of heaven,—a prize which will continue to increase in proportion to merit, and of which every good deed will bring an attendant part and foretaste. To this I would direct the attention of youth, as their most prominent, earliest and most frequent object. To this I would direct, if possible, all their desires, as an object worthy in itself and designed to be an ultimate end of action. Do this or that *duty*, I would urge, and it will make you better and happier now, and fit you for obtaining endless bliss. This is a prize of no human giving, nor within human power to give; yet one, which the finger of faith points at, as held out by the hand of God. One, as was remarked, in the first part of this lecture, which experience, or its result, philosophy, assures us, has ever adorned the breast of virtue, and one that we may surely promise to virtue, as the noblest of all prizes; and one which God himself proclaims to be not only a prize for the faithful here, but as a crown of immortal honor. Do you think youth will not understand this abstract object? Let them try it; keep it before them; let them grow up under its incessant incitements to well-doing; and if this do not incline them to good principles and habits, while discipline keeps them from the bad, no other prize can.

The next incitement I would commend, is that of *example*. This whether direct, or, through reference indirect, is the grand *lever* of all moral influence, to which popular sentiment is the chief moving power.

The most obvious effects of example, I am aware, are very commonly noticed ; but noticed usually, I suspect, rather as incidental phenomena, than otherwise. Every one has felt, as well as observed, the contagion of a social yawn, a laughing concert, or very prevalent customs ; and it has been commonly enough remarked, how often the published example of some daring villany, exploit, or suicide, has induced and been followed by several others. But the applicableness of example for producing designed results, it seems to me, has been overlooked and a due credit seldom attributed to its agency.

Allow me, therefore, to mention a few illustrative instances of the practical efficacy of example, before I speak of its school applications.

Farmers and mechanics tell us, that to produce industry in the field or shop, they must themselves set the example. To be simply overseeing, they generally find, only incites among laborers a wish for the same idle ease.

The orator knows full well, that his only way to move others is, to appear in earnest and moved himself. If he stand like an automaton, though constantly emitting golden precepts, all wrapped in Ciceronian periods, not an auditor will be roused.

So, also, in the crisis of battles, the power of example has been strikingly exemplified. Think, for a moment, of the Homeric heroes before the walls of Troy ; of Leonidas, by the spell of example, inspiring his three hundred Spartans to brave the hosts of Xerxes ; of Napoleon, at the bridge of Lodi ; and then pause with me, for a few moments, upon the example of our own Washington, at the battle of Princeton. There the Americans being met by two British regiments, at the first onset were routed, and Gen. Mercer, leading the van, fell. At this moment, under a brisk charge of the enemy, Washington rode to the front. I fancy I see him in that field of glory now, with a dauntless spirit firing his frame, enkindling courage, as he rides, in every heart. I see him in the

mid-contest between two armies, spurring on his horse, pointing his sword to the enemy, and rallying his broken ranks to confront and repulse the foe; and, true to the influence of an example so valiant, they obey; and to this is it justly attributed by Ramsey, in his *Life of Washington*, that our faltering countrymen recovered their order, returned the British fire, and gained a victory.

I fear of dwelling tritely upon a point which I might almost use as an axiom, yet I trust you will indulge me a little longer, while alluding to a few more of the general effects of example among children.

Any person may easily discern, that children are very observing of forms and actions, and love to imitate them, long before they can understand a precept to the same effect. Hence, their fondness for pictures and picture-making; and the advantage of a black-board, or blocks, for explaining principles by symbols, rather than by logical reasonings. Let children *see* something done, and they will try to do it. Show them a picture, writing, or problem, and if not complicated, they will try to imitate it; and, in every trial, may be induced to improve upon their former efforts; while, at the same time, verbal explanations, quite clear to reasoning adults, might not aid them at all. It is, indeed, often found difficult for adults, not trained to it, to comprehend abstract ideas, not represented by material symbols, or allusions to them; and, therefore, have all poets and ideal writers been profuse in figures, or what the Scriptures term parables.

Close observers must have noticed how apt children are, in their earliest years, to catch

“The manners, *living*, as they rise;”

the shrug of a father, the blinking eye of a mother, the awkward gait of a clown, or the easy grace of the dancer.

In acquiring language, too, the force of example is very perceptible; for we find, in very many cases, that in spite of

schools and dictionaries, persons are most apt to follow the nursery, parlor or other usage, to which they are exposed.

I have myself observed whole schools, in a country village, unheedingly parroting their teacher's phrases, or the long-drawn tones of the clergyman ; and again, I have heard a child, at three years old, lisping, naturally, a critical elegance of language, with a scholar's ease ; and I am sure the hypercritical, who are more intent on sound than sense, must be often shocked by the discordant utterance of even our public orators, and the many obvious vulgarisms, unwittingly pronounced by our *literati*.

But enough has been said, to show how much depends upon example, both negatively and positively, in education ; and while artizans are depending almost exclusively upon it to instruct their apprentices, it surely deserves more attention from us. I will now add a few particulars in regard to its school application.

In the first place, we may incite an interest in study, recitations, or other exercises, by appearing interested ourselves. I could name a retired teacher of this city, who, I have heard, so tested and applied this principle, that his pupils, after several years, still continue to glow with a general literary taste, which will not easily be extinguished.

To industry, we may incite, by showing ourselves engaged in our part *with* the school, on our feet, in their midst, for discipline or aid. If we sit, idly dallying with school-time, at our desks, or seemingly listless, they will do and seem likewise ; and thus, in their deportment, often portray that of their teachers.

Again : By reference to examples in life or books, we may still further use this incitement, though indirectly. As a stimulant to intellectual efforts, we may mention scholars, who, by their own exertions, rose through many difficulties to the highest attainments ; as, Franklin, Lady Jane Grey, Sir Humphrey Davy, Roger Sherman, and other instances, which will readily

occur to you. We may encourage perseverance, by reminding youth of the lesson which Robert Bruce derived from the spider. And of a like lesson, to "try again," taught by the example of an ant to the discomfited Tamerlane; whence he became one of the most renowned of conquerors. Tell children the story of Archimedes,—of his triumphant delight, upon discovering the secret of the crown's alloy.

Such inductive lessons will inspire youth with confidence, and incite them to a perseverance over all difficulties, which will increase with every success, till, though Alpine obstacles intervene, the heroic soul will glory in surmounting them, and, like Hannibal, press on to greater triumphs.

The next incitement to be commended, is that of *religious* influence. This, though mentioned last, is first in importance, should be earliest begun, most frequently used, and latest in continuance; one which should be regarded as the key-stone of the moral arch, upon which must rest the whole structure of moral character.

As we look over the pages of biography, we find, that nearly all great-good men, blessed by the light of revelation, were early taught "to remember their Creator in the days of their youth;" and one among these,—he whom the world delights to honor, who is our nation's boast,—has said, "Religion is the only source whence correct principles can flow." And another, but little less honored, though in a narrower sphere, has proclaimed aloud in this, our city, that, "neither freedom, nor virtue, nor knowledge, has any vigor or immortal hope, except in the principles of the Christian faith, and in the sanctions of the Christian religion."

In the days of our Pilgrim fathers, we cannot doubt, that religion, though much alloyed with bigotry, was more regarded in schools than now. "They founded," says the author last quoted, "the fabric of their prosperity in a severe and masculine morality; having intelligence for its cement, and religion for its ground-work."

But I fear, that with us, their descendants, there is a strong tendency to a disrespect for true piety ; a *fashionable* disposition to make religious worship a weekly tribute to a hard master ; to confine all religious exercises, whether of children or adults, to the weekly formalities of the church or Sunday school.

In such a state of the public mind, amid the worldly allurements to pleasure and ambition, and the wide-spread influence of infidelity, without a deep-working religious incitement, the spiritual supremacy, on which I have so strongly insisted, can never be established. To accomplish this object, religion must be gradually and agreeably interwoven with *all* the associations of youth, especially at school. There, it should be breathed by them, as a vital atmosphere ; they should grow up under its nurturings, and spiritually live upon it. Then, though infidelity should undermine the already crumbling pillars of formal creeds, —though the scaffolding of religion might fall,—yet the *true spirit*, Christianity, as a living temple, would remain, self-sustained in the hearts of the rising generation. We must not, however, for this, make the school a platform of partial dogmas. Nor need we there obtrude a single disputed point. No. We have only to infuse into the hearts of our pupils the fundamental principles of Christianity ; that there is a God, their heavenly Father, who knows all their thoughts, to whom they are ever responsible, and who will receive, after death, the good to a blessed home in heaven. We must not hope to infuse the spirit of these principles by occasional moral lectures. Such may serve well to influence reasoning adults, but children will little heed them, and seldom comprehend their bearing. Nor should we rely solely on the influence of good example, or the incidental blendings of religion with recitations and general discipline. But we must train them, if it may be, to devotional *habits*.

In the days of the Puritans, prayers were offered, morning and evening, both in the family and the school ; and the Bible

was almost the only reading-book. But how is it now? Are not these good old customs becoming too much neglected, and almost superseded by an undue culture of the intellect? The law, indeed, provides for a cold and formal attention to these exercises in public schools, and some communities indulge their private teachers in them. But a hearty interest for these devotions, I fear, is not felt. They are rather held in secondary consideration to all things else. Indeed, in many schools, neither a prayer is heard, nor a Bible read, from one year to another; and some parents would think it time lost, to admit them. I do not say, I would have the old fashion revived, of making the Bible the principal class-book. Nor do I suppose children will, at first, fully appreciate the importance of these religious exercises. But I do say, we must anticipate the time when our pupils may understand and feel their value, and guard against the coming of those evil days, when they may say, "We have no pleasure in them." We must sow the seed of religious truth in the spring of life. With faith, we must scatter the precious grains, as do the Egyptians upon the waters of the Nile; and when the floods of animal vivacity have subsided, we may confidently trust, that fruitful germs of virtue will spring forth abundantly.

I would have the Bible more generally read in schools than at present; if for nothing more, at least, as a devotional exercise. A late writer says of this sacred book for college use, that, "As a classic, it stands unrivalled, and should be studied for the richness of its imagery, the beauty of its poetry, and the power of its eloquence, as well as to mingle its guardian, purifying influences with the classic beauties of other tongues. It should be studied as an inspired book, developing the character of God, the laws of the universe, and the remedial system for their support."

"For the purity of its precepts, the sublimity of its doctrines, and the power of its motives, it should be studied; to invigorate the intellect, to form the conscience, to purify the heart, and to prepare society for the life that is, and is to come."

Yet, strange as it may seem, these beauties and merits of the Bible, like all common blessings, the diurnal cheerings of the sun, the recurring seasons, health, and the vital elements that sustain us, are less and less appreciated, and need often to be pointed out, to engage attention. To obviate such neglect, I would have a portion of the holy volume read, at least, once a day, in every school, and followed by the general repetition of a short, unfamiliarized prayer or hymn.

Or perhaps it might be well, to have some good selection of parts of the Bible, purposely compiled for children, and arranged in short lessons, for separate reading ; and to accompany this, a book of suitable prayers, made with a sufficient variety to allow a new one each day in the year, adapted for responsive repetition, and alternating with some plain hymns or chants. A sacred lesson being then read, at the opening of the school, by the teacher, or one of the older scholars, a hymn chanted in concert, or a prayer fervently uttered by the teacher, and responded to, from separate copies, by the whole school, all kneeling or sitting at the time, I am sure, could not fail to be of beneficial influence. Nor would there be that inattention and indifference to exercises so conducted, which we notice when children are obliged to hear daily the same monotonous prayer, in which they take no active part themselves. In most schools, these devotions would be found to *interest* children,—to elicit their moral affections,—give them a right bias,—and fix them on proper objects. In fine, it would give the school a tone of order, through the whole routine of each day's duty.

At the close of the school, however, when children are generally fatigued, and impatient to get away, it may perhaps be best to dispense with any religious exercise. Indeed, at such a time, it might do more hurt than good.

I have now finished the discussion of the means or incitements which I consider most conducive to the gradual suppression of the early physical predominance and to the establishment of the spiritual supremacy.

But all this, though it may incline the pupil to his several duties to God, his fellows and himself, yet may not result in well-doing. We must add thereto intelligence. We must fill the lamp of intellect from the cruise of truth, and see that it be well trimmed and burning.

This brings me to the consideration of what the intellect is, and the special incitements, not included in the moral education, which are appropriate to it.

But, in view of the widely extended field of intellectual education, time will not permit me to traverse it with you, even cursorily; and, therefore, I shall only attempt to point out some of its most prominent features.

By the intellect, I understand, simply, the active skill of the soul to gather, retain, and apply knowledge. And the faculties which this mental skill includes, may be compared, in their action, to their sub-organs, the physical powers; are subject to analogous laws, and are to be similarly trained to energetic service. In developing them, we have, as intimated in the definition, two principal objects:

1. To incite, in the intellectual gathering and retaining, a preference for the true and useful.
2. To concentrate the faculties upon *applying* knowledge to serviceable ends.

To which, I may add, as a third object, that these incitements should be impressed and fixed upon the mind by the seal of *habit*.

To *receive* knowledge, children need no other inducement than to be well supplied. For, through the natural impulses of curiosity and admiration, they crave and delight in simple kinds of knowledge, as a mental food. But as these impulses are apt to become vitiated, and the mental appetite, curiosity, too indeterminate to induce the requisite mental labor, our first object is to culture and train the mind to these necessary labors.

We must expect, of course, according to the premises as-

sumed in this lecture, that the intellectual impulses and faculties will be at first linked in subservience to the sensual predominance.

A child, left to himself, will probably regard very little the usefulness of knowledge, except so far as it may seem to minister immediate aid to sensual gratifications. He will chiefly be intent upon the passive exercise of the mind, through the senses, in seeing, hearing, tasting and touching. Soon after, we see him incline to impressions made by symmetry and grace of figures, or any uncommon grouping of them. And, as with the beautiful in external nature, so will he be pleased with prettiness of imagery; he will prefer such literature as abounds with ideal pictures of natural beauty, and with the novel or marvellous. And when he has run through a course of *real* novelties, if fictions fall in his way, or be presented to his attention as mental food, he will, of course, prefer them, like sweetmeats, to the more substantial and less spicy kinds; and the taste, if thus pampered, will become perverted into a lasting predilection for highly-wrought fiction. To avoid this evil, although it must prevail a little at first, yet, as I have assumed, our duty is to foster the interests of curiosity, and early enlist admiration in favor of applicable facts. We are, in short, to induce youth

"To seize on *Truth*, where'er 'tis found,  
Among their friends, among their foes;  
On Christian or on heathen ground:  
The flower's divine, where'er it grows."

To this end, whether to incite a preference for general literature, or for any particular branch, example will be found quite as efficacious as in morals, whether it be direct or indirect, incidental or designed. But to avoid the risk of accidental bias, instructors and parents must be vigilant to present examples, which may early direct the youthful mind to its proper objects.

Accidental bias, however, may indeed often chance to be as favorable as any other, as in the instances of the poet Cowley, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Dr. Franklin and others. It is said, that Pascal was inspired with his ardent love for mathematics, by a casual hearing of some comments upon their pleasures and utilities, made by a guest of his father.

But any trust in chance incitements is not safe. We must begin *early* to give a bias for truth, and the particular branches for which the youth seems best fitted, and which we would wish him to pursue. Nor must we rest content with inspiring a mere preference; but must kindle predilection into strong desire; to effect which, we cannot do better than to adopt, together with personal and other example, the plan of that most successful teacher, as well as parent, the mother of Sir William Jones; of whom it is said by Lord Teignmouth, that "she *led* her son's mind, *insensibly*, to knowledge, by exciting his curiosity, and directing it to useful objects. To his incessant importunities for information, on casual topics of conversation, which she watchfully stimulated, she constantly replied, '*Read, and you will know!*'—a maxim, by the observance of which, his desire to learn became as eager as his mother's to teach, and to which Sir William always acknowledged himself indebted, for all his attainments."

But if we foster youthful curiosity even to a voracious eagerness for knowledge, and stop there, it will be of little *actual* service. It may refine the taste, dispel much of the mists of error, open wide avenues to contemplation, and abundant feasts for curiosity and admiration; and, if the memory be retentive, may make of the pupil so much more than a mere book-worm, that his mind shall be a complete army-list, like that of Cyrus,—a living synopsis of literature, as was that of the celebrated librarian, Magliabechi.

But this can never make *able*, or *usefully active* minds. For this purpose, or agreeably to our second requisite, to induce and accustom youth to serious, hard thinking, to the puzzling

The pupils whom we educate, are not mere *darlings* of parental solicitude, to be changed about at the suggestions of caprice or convenience. They are objects of *general* interest, over whom we are placed, as responsible guardians. We are ourselves interested in the success of their training to good habits, not only in prospect of their becoming living memorials of our labors, but as our brothers in the human family. The world is interested in the habits and character they form, as candidates for society. Our country is interested ; as the youth of our schools are the princes and princesses of our Republic, soon to have influence in her government and rank. God also demands, that they be nurtured and brought up in the way they should go, as heirs of immortality. Let these claims then be urged upon parents and guardians, till they be made to *feel* their urgency and justice : and let us sustain them while we can, and *act* under them as solemn obligations.

I will now add a few remarks in closing this lecture, on the relative bearing the intellect has on the two kinds or sets of impulses in our being.

The intellect was once among us comparatively neglected ; and both parents and teachers, instead of directing the curiosity of youth to right sources, rather inclined to deny and suppress their importuning inquiries. But, of late, the current mode has taken to an opposite extreme, and the supply of the intellect takes place of almost all else. Of course, without the light of any knowledge, the mind, however well disposed, must grope in darkness, and, knowing not whither it moves, or how best to effect its will, must become a mere machine, or vacillating vane, subject to every breeze of opinion. If, in this ignorant state, the animal impulses should *predominate*, and the passions rage, the blind and passive soul, bound to a brutal nature, like Mazeppa to the Ukraine steed, must run a most wild and hazardous career of chance.

On the other hand, if the spiritual impulses predominate,

and the lamp of intellect be not well filled with the oil of knowledge, if narrow views of worldly relations and things preclude the light of sound reason, a zealot must be the result, who, full of overboiling virtue, eager and precipitous in benevolence, with no foresight of the train of evils that attend his Utopian schemes, may produce more inquiry than benefit.

Then, again, if the youthful impulses remain unsubdued, and active intelligence be added, it will be but a tool to their aid, and must, in general, make a man of the world, a selfish economist, who with a due punctilio, will ever study a fair appearance, be politic and shrewd; wear, as need be, the cloaks of civil, legal, or political morality, and even of religion if it serve his end, and yet be contemptibly base at heart. Such, I fear, are too often the effects of the modern *exclusive* attention to intellect. The world, however, is beginning to perceive, that intelligence alone is not to be relied upon. Even the English nobility, and others, have noted, that, of *itself*, intellectual education, however liberal, is no preventive of crime; and that

“Talents angel-bright, if wanting worth,  
Are shining instruments in false Ambition's hand,  
To furnish faults illustrious, and give infamy renown.”

The French Commissioners, in their report of our prisons, and indeed our own “Prison Discipline Reports,” show, that ignorance is not alone, as a mother of vice. Our prison walls incarcerate not only ignorant dupes, but many of even collegiate education; and if we could lift the veil of dissimulation from those who live in palaces, or bask in the light of worldly respectability, we might probably find many worse criminals than the law detects, who still escape by their arch sagacity and intelligence.

In view of these and other considerations, we must naturally ever feel a fearful solicitude for pupils about to dare the stormy

billows of the moral ocean. But, fitted out as I think a youth may be by the course I have suggested, he may be confidently trusted to weigh the anchor of pupilage ; and, if I have made my views understood, I indulge the hope, that some among you will not only acquiesce in the plan I have proposed, but award to it that highest of commendations, a practical application.

**LECTURE V.**

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**ON**

**THE DUTIES OF FEMALE TEACHERS**

**OF**

**COMMON SCHOOLS.**

**By DANIEL KIMBALL.**



# DUTIES OF FEMALE TEACHERS

OF

## COMMON SCHOOLS.

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THOUGH my subject has not the grace of novelty, it will be an interesting and important one, so long as the relation between teacher and pupil, or parent and child, shall continue.

The mind, in the intellectual and moral, is what the face of the earth is in the natural world. As a field, if correctly cultivated or neglected, is soon overspread with worthless, pernicious, or delightful vegetation, so, intellectually and morally considered, are the mind and heart. It is wise, by early and judicious culture, to prevent the first appearance of that which cannot be permitted to grow without injury, and when grown, in whatever degree, cannot be eradicated without labor and care.

In the human structure and powers, there are all the varieties of excellence and imperfection which are found in soils, from the richly fertile, to the barren and worthless; or in the materials and workmanship of buildings and machinery, of the meanest and of the most magnificent order. There are materials of human kind, susceptible of high polish and splendor; and such also, as defy all labor and art to ornament and improve them. And much of mental and moral difference arises

from other causes, than organic, constitutional, or physical tendencies and developments. The character of many children, like the productions of many fields, owes its comparative value, chiefly, if we say not entirely, to care, culture, or neglect. Give children, from their infancy, the same example or instruction, or as nearly such as is practicable, and I am persuaded, though you would still find diversity, you would find far less diversity than at present in their attainments, in their virtues and vices, in their inclinations and habits.

There are incidental circumstances which operate as causes in forming the mind and heart. And none can estimate the exact influences on education, resulting from various seen and unseen causes. We might safely say, too, that precisely the same education cannot be given to different individuals, even under the same teacher, or in the same family. The work of education is always going on ; and the minds and characters of our children or pupils are often operated on, for good or for evil, by circumstances with which we are perfectly unacquainted. It is an important fact, that every person who addresses young children, every indulgence or denial of their wishes, every word of commendation or censure bestowed upon them, the very air, exercise, food, clothing and confinement to which they are accustomed, are among the thousand circumstances to be taken into the amount of influences on their education. But though we cannot estimate the precise effect of incidental circumstances and causes which operate on their minds and morals, we must admit that in producing the literary and moral differences, the narrow and liberal, the benevolent and selfish feelings and conduct of men, the lessons and impressions of early childhood, to whatever causes attributable, and whatever their external organs indicate, have had a powerful agency.

From the right culture of early childhood there is every thing to hope. It will generally be found true, that, if you "train up a child in the way he should go, when he is old he will not depart from it." Yet observation and experience prove how

difficult, as well as important it is, to give him such training. For children, while very young, are all eye, all ear, and all memory, in regard to what they see, hear, and read. From neglect, error, and indiscretion in their early culture there is every thing to fear. They are operated upon variously and powerfully, apart from lessons in their regular course of instruction. And such and so strong should be their first correct impressions, as to be a powerful guard against influences tending to give them a wrong direction. Their earliest mental and moral movements are, by far, more important than many ever imagined; and in instances without number they are never changed. Young children are not unfrequently perfect miniatures of future men and women.

Take care of beginnings, is the dictate of discretion and experience. No effect more directly follows from its cause, than intellectual and moral good and evil from a good or bad beginning. Trivial faults, so called, committed at first with caution, are soon repeated with confidence. And early lessons of wisdom and virtue, received and acted upon, are not easily effaced or impaired. The confirmed characters of falsehood, of fraud, of intemperance, of impurity, of practical atheism, which have been gradual in their progress, might, by seasonable thought and care, have been prevented; and characters directly the reverse might have been formed. But to change characters formed in early youth; to induce the just and true to become the friends and advocates of wickedness; to bring into the way of moral integrity and honor the slaves to bad passion, propensity, and habit, will never cease to require arduous efforts and unyielding resolutions. The spark that is preparing for conflagration you can instantly extinguish; but you cannot extinguish the flame in which your habitation is enveloped. With inconsiderable labor you can change the direction of a gentle stream at its source; but your efforts for that purpose can avail you nothing, when the stream by its progress has acquired the force of an overwhelming torrent. And to remove the effects

of early lessons and impressions on the principles and character is hardly less laborious and difficult.

In the preceding remarks we see a wide, important field of duty for female teachers of common schools. To them is committed the work of forming and modifying many of the early impressions of childhood. For who are the special objects of their care? They are young children, included, with few exceptions, within the ages of three and twelve years. From these teachers they receive many of the impressions which are to remain with them through life. What then is the importance of their office, and what their responsibility? What is required of them in regard to duty and qualification? To them belongs the duty of giving the first right direction to the infantile powers. They have an important agency in forming the outlines of the young character, and the leading features which it will exhibit in the integrity and worth of future men and women. By their duties, faithfully performed, many will be saved from the ranks of the profane, the worthless, and the polluted. Their qualifications too, if competent, will correspond to the duties which their profession requires.

It is the duty of the teachers of these schools to give instruction in the physical, intellectual and moral departments. The children of such schools must, of course, have the benefit of pure air and free exercise. They must not be held in too long or too severe confinement. The life, and health, and sprightliness of young children are much interested in the boundaries or limits prescribed for their leisure hours and various active exercises. They will not need from teachers much incitement to necessary motion and activity. Little else will be necessary than permission for such exercises, and care that they be not excessive. Children have within themselves, in their vivacious and buoyant spirits, that, which, under judicious checks, directions and superintendence of teachers, will provide in good measure, for their physical education.

The teachers of these schools are required, of course, to in-

struct in what is familiarly called "the common branches." This expression includes reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, history and grammar. They should know something of animated nature; something of the science of mind, of its powers and operations. It will be well, if they have extended their thoughts to other departments of knowledge; well, if they are so far acquainted with music, as to lead and aid the children in singing.

The teacher of a common school will have under her care children, who, if they can pronounce their names intelligibly, do not know the letters that compose them. She will have under her care some, who, from vitiated associates, and, it may be, from the negligence and bad example of parents, have received impressions, which it will concern her to correct. She will have others, also, who have wisely commenced the course which they should be encouraged and assisted to pursue. On such materials she is to operate, adapting her instructions to their respective ages, capacities and wants. In this she will be furnished with the trial, and will give proof of her ability and merit. She must, then, have a competent knowledge of young minds; of the influence of association over them; of their comparative powers and susceptibilities; of the motives by which they can be suitably influenced. She should also feel that sense of the importance of the character and improvement of young children, which will strengthen the cord that binds her to their interest and to her profession. It should be in her power and disposition to make herself acceptable and intelligible to children; to bring the communications of her mind to a level and in contact with their minds and thoughts.

It is the teacher's duty, while endeavoring to gain the attention of the children to her directions, to be considerate and judicious in what she requires of them. She should never require what they cannot render; what would too severely tax their minds and memories; what would not be, or appear to them to be, reasonable. She should not overburden them with words

which are acquired with painful effort, because they are to them without interest and without meaning. She should not think, that the repetition of answers from the text books will make philosophers, astronomers, or chemists of any, before they can read intelligently. She should not believe that the power to repeat mood and tense, rule upon rule, and page after page, with infinite volubility, proves an acquaintance with grammar, arithmetic, geography, history, or rhetoric. Her duty is more concerned with inducing children to think and understand, than merely to utter words in prescribed form. It will be a point with every good teacher to instruct her pupils, as soon as they can receive such instruction, in the reasons implied, as well as in the given language. To understand a principle she will consider far more important to her scholars, than to repeat a rule. She will think less of preparing them for a fine recitation, than for the benefits to be derived from mental discipline. She will consider it important, early to exercise and improve the memory, but not to the neglect of instructing the mind to reflect, compare and discriminate. And young children who can readily return the answers to questions in the precise order in which they stand, and in the given language, should be prepared, by thought and reflection, to render intelligent answers to questions, proposed in different order, and not found in their lessons, in their own unborrowed and simple language.

Since much of the business of education consists in teaching or in learning to think correctly, and fitly to express thoughts; children should early be taught to reflect, to reason, and to express in familiar language the meaning of what they read and study. But they should not be required, and, I might say, they should not be permitted, to study or read what they cannot comprehend; for this would be unfavorable to their interest in books, and to their mental improvement. It is not the number of books read, or the number and length of lessons repeated, that forms scholars; but the valuable thoughts that have place

in their minds, that are usefully operating there, and that can be rendered, when required, in suitable language. The child's mind, as respects thought and action, though called to exert itself in the work of improvement, is not to be left alone and unassisted. It is the teacher's duty to aid the child in gaining and developing thought; but not to think for the child; to bring out and exhibit its nature, in concurrence with its own efforts, as well as "to pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind." For their own mental and moral improvement children should be taught to labor. The price of that improvement, and the value of that improvement, will be the amount of the labor bestowed by the child. The powers of the mind, as well as those of the body, require action for their development and preservation; and they are strengthened and invigorated by seasonable, sufficient and well-directed efforts. Make every thing in the course of education as easy as possible to children, however young, and you do them a positive injury; for you take from them the necessary stimulus to exertion, and you leave nothing for the trial of their power, for the proof of their ingenuity. That child will much longer need leading-strings than would otherwise be necessary, who is not required to aid himself in learning to walk. They will not acquire true independence of thought and action, who have others always ready to think and act for them. The teacher should give to children that attention which promotes a seasonable and healthy, not a premature growth of the mind; which tends to keep them within the boundaries that appropriately belong to their age and character. There is a kind of independence of spirit in some children, which requires to be restricted. And there is a kind of dependence or timidity of spirit in others, early to be guarded against, which prevents the full growth of the mind; which enfeebles its best energies: which tends to hold it in a state of imbecility in every subsequent period. Children should be taught, as early as they can understand, the strength and value of their powers; and, though always modest and respect-

ful they should sometimes be left to think and act on their own responsibility. And it should never be forgotten, that the best mode of early instruction does not prevent children from mental labor, but takes care to provide for them the necessary instruments with which to labor, and to afford needful aid in the right exercise of them.

The spirit of curiosity, or of useful inquiry, common in young children, is a favorable indication, and ought not to be disregarded. Ingenious and ingenuous children are disposed to ask many interesting questions. In this inquisitive disposition, both by parents and teachers, they should be indulged, encouraged, commended. The rightly qualified teacher will patiently and gratefully lend her ear to such inquiries, and her voice of instruction to the earliest desire of information so proposed. Always encouraging the love of useful knowledge, she will distinguish the desire of such knowledge from idle and impertinent curiosity. And she will not hesitate, on some occasions, to say to her young inquirers, that she cannot answer all their questions, for some of them she does not understand. This, I am persuaded, will be far more beneficial to teacher and scholar than evasive and incorrect answers. It will be to them a seasonable lesson of ingenuousness and plain-dealing; and to find, that, with all their information, their teachers know not every thing, will be an encouragement to interested learners. The ardent minds of youth will thus be aided in their efforts to go forward. Nor will their respect for their teachers be impaired by this evidence of their frankness and truth. And who can tell us how many highly gifted philosophers, statesmen, poets and historians, might have been raised from the comparatively unimproved classes, by suitable encouragement given to their early inquiries; men, who have been lost to literature and the sciences, by the checks and reproofs administered to their youthful and laudable curiosity!

It is the duty of the teachers of whom I am speaking, to make their instructions correspond to the respective ages, capa-

cities and wants of their scholars. In whatever they teach, confining their requisitions to common branches of education,—such as can be understood in common schools,—much depends for success on beginning as well as on proceeding right. The first position should be understood before the next is taken. And harmony should be maintained between the progress in what is read and studied, and progress in intellectual power. Every teacher of such schools will find it among her wise regulations, to use for the readings and recitings of her classes, books which are not above their capacity, and to forbear introducing for those purposes, however highly recommended and suited to schools of a different character, such books as require more mental progress than her scholars have made. The judicious selecting and adapting of school books for the use and to the character of the scholars, is a point of much importance, and, I cannot doubt, receives far less attention than it deserves. It would be well for many of our common schools, if their female teachers were consulted, as the competent advisers of the school committees, in their selection of books. I will here take the liberty to remark, that, though flooded with books, school books and Sunday school books, for all ages and all classes, we have not a supply of precisely the books that are needed. And I will take the liberty also to enter my protest against a practice that has been quite too common. It is this: the names of many respectable individuals have been obtained, as endorsers to the public, in favor of books designed for schools, without a thorough examination having been given to their claims for this purpose; and thus books of little value have sometimes acquired an undeserved reputation. Education, in many schools, has suffered, and is suffering, from this cause. And here permit me to add, that while it is well to patronize books suited to the wants of the community, no respectable individual should give his name in favor of any which he has not thoroughly examined. There are, in numerous instances, in our common schools, books for

reading and study, ill-suited to the wants of these schools. There should be adaptation, as far as may be, of the child to the book to be read or studied, and of the book to the child. This is exceedingly important, and demands far more attention than it has received. To prepare precisely the books we want for the use of schools of various character, requires the best efforts of the ablest and best minds. We acknowledge with gratitude, the labors of some minds of this class in this field of duty. May they and others like them be successful in correcting the judgment and taste of the public! As a general rule, children, however young, should not be permitted, or be placed in a situation, to pass over obstacles in reading or study, instead of removing them. A change of their course, on account of its difficulties and discouragements, is sometimes necessary. It is not the quantity studied or passed over, but *how* the individual has studied or passed over, that makes the proficient, at whatever age. The error, that the number of books read and recited is proof of the remarkable genius and scholarship of sons and daughters, apart from the amount of information or from the strength of principle acquired, every teacher should endeavor to correct.

One of the most, and I will venture to say, the most, important of the common branches of intellectual education, is reading; and to be able to instruct well in this, is among the essential duties of female teachers of common schools. I must be permitted to dwell, for a few minutes, on this topic.

Much of the bad reading of persons of all ages is owing to the defective manner in which they were first taught to read. Children's pronunciation, in learning the alphabet, requires the teacher's peculiar care; for the foundation of good or bad reading is then often deeply laid. It would doubtless amuse many, and especially the younger portion of the audience, to know the manner in which those of my own age were first taught to read. It requires an effort of the imagination, to reach the height of the absurd in former modes of teaching in

this branch of education. But I have not time to go into detail and illustration. There is still a call for improvement on this subject, through the ability and care of teachers. For this purpose, it is necessary to note minute circumstances. A wrong position of the organs of speech, however apparently unimportant, often prevents correct utterance. And an indistinct, drawling, lifeless manner of reading, formed into early habit, is not easily corrected. Every teacher of a common school should understand the use of these organs, the opening of the mouth, the position of the tongue, lips and teeth, necessary to give distinct utterance to all the sounds of the letters. It requires a teacher's peculiar care, to prevent the formation of bad habits of pronunciation; for, to break down a drawling, hissing, monotonous, indistinct habit, will be found more difficult,—all experienced teachers know the fact,—than to form good readers of such as do not know a letter of the alphabet. Suitable care, on the part of duly qualified teachers, will enable children, who begin right, to pronounce every syllable and letter correctly; to read without drawl, or scream, or lifelessness, using nearly the same tones of voice which they use in conversation. If there are those of all ages who read in such a manner as to distress every hearer, whose reading and speaking voices differ as much as the voices of any two individuals differ, early bad teaching is generally chargeable for the defect.

Distinct pronunciation is an indispensable requisite in good reading. But it is not necessary, in order to read distinctly, to vociferate or over-exert the lungs. Clear articulation has more power for enabling readers or speakers to be well heard, than mere quantity of sound. In connection with competent strength of voice, it is necessary to pronounce every syllable and letter which is not designed to be silent; to prevent the drawing of one word or syllable into another by continuous sound; to give free passage to the voice, and the right position and motion to all the vocal organs. By that care in the beginning, which is among the duties of the teachers of common

schools, most of the instances of an indistinct, stammering, heavy and spiritless manner of reading, and of speaking, too, might have been prevented. These and other defects do not often arise from physical or necessary causes. They are more frequently owing to the misuse of good organs than to the possession of bad ones.

The duty of the class of teachers which my subject contemplates, requires the knowledge, I would say, the practical knowledge or right use of accent, emphasis, inflection, modulation and pauses. On these points, they should be able to teach by their example. There are persons, we are aware,—and I do not refer to any single profession,—who read sentence after sentence, and paragraph after paragraph, as if the whole were one sentence or one word. There are those, who, by placing the emphasis wrong, by placing it on any words, or on all words, indiscriminately, and by erroneous inflections of voice, pervert the meaning of much that they read, or greatly detract from its force, beauty and expressiveness. Teachers should take lessons for their own benefit, by noticing such defects. And powerful are the effects of good and bad reading. Owing to defects and excellences in reading, the same passages are sometimes mistaken for passages of very different character and importance.

And good reading requires,—as all rightly qualified teachers know,—much variety in depression, elevation and strength of voice, to suit the subject and the sentiment. The voice, well disciplined to reading, will vary as much, in rising and falling, in soft and loud, in passing from syllable to syllable, from word to word, from expression to expression, as it does in passing from note to note, and from expression to expression, in performing strains of music adapted to variety of sentiment.

Much of the correct in reading arises from the just observance, and much of the defective, from a too mechanical observance, of the characters in punctuation, as respects the time and inflection given them. In conversation, we are not influ-

enced by the sight of points, in regard to length, depth and height of pauses and sounds, but we give the natural current of thought and expression. In reading, a degree of stiffness and preciseness is often induced by too close attention to directions laid down in the books. We know, that the length of pauses, in good reading, varies; the same point requiring different lengths, according to the nature of the passages read. A comma, for example, in one instance, may require a pause of equal length with a period, in another. We know, there will be occasion for pauses, in reading with propriety and force, where none are written; and that something beside written characters is necessary, to aid in reading with right inflections of voice. To read well, requires correct judgment and taste, with a clear apprehension of the meaning and spirit of the composition. The several remarks now offered on reading, might be usefully illustrated by pertinent and impressive examples of the correct and erroneous, in manner and expression. But to do this satisfactorily, would require more time than my limits would permit.

To be good readers is peculiarly important for female teachers of common schools; for to them belongs the duty of giving the first lessons and impressions in this important branch of education. All teachers of such schools should be able to give, in their own reading, specimens of the excellent and the defective. Apart from their efforts to teach, their good example in this, as in every other qualification, will have a very desirable influence through the school.

Reading, I cannot doubt, deserves more attention, a higher place in most of our common schools, than it receives; and early correct discipline, in this branch, cannot be too highly recommended. For good reading is often the cause as well as the effect of mental and moral culture. They can hardly fail to derive pleasure and improvement from reading, who have early learned to read well. Owing to defective instruction in their early lessons, many, late in life, have, for the first time,

discovered their indistinct, drawling, spiritless and dispiriting style of reading. By correct attention in their first lessons, under a competent teacher, unless the ear be remarkably defective in the discrimination of sounds, and the mind too obtuse for effective action, such evil may be prevented.

With this department of primary and vital interest to a competent education, the teachers, whose duty I am considering, are much concerned. And none should consider themselves, or be considered, well qualified teachers of such schools, who do not read distinctly and with correct emphasis, and who fail of conveying to others the meaning and force of what they read. So important do I deem this subject, in relation to a numerous class of our respected teachers, and so connected with general improvement of mind and morals, that I have not hesitated to remark with freedom on some of the too common defects in reading. The subject requires a full, and, properly treated, would furnish an interesting and valuable, lecture. A volume would hardly contain the remarks that might be offered respecting its value, as a means of high intellectual and moral culture and enjoyment.

It is their duty, and the female teachers of common schools should feel it to be their imperious duty, to impart a due portion of moral and religious instruction. Children cannot too early have a sense of the worth of correct principles of action, and of the right and wrong in moral conduct. And among their earliest impressions, should be the importance of the love and observance of truth. This lies at the foundation of valuable character. This remark may be applied to man, in his intellectual, social, political, and religious duties and relations. To say truly of a man, woman and child, that they cannot utter a falsehood, is high commendation,—is an indication of genuine independence and moral courage. And deplorably defective are the intellect, the morals and religion of the man, woman or child, on whose character for truth you cannot rely. From their first exercise of reason and memory, children should

be guarded against all evasion and deceit. And it should be well understood, that there is, aside from language, that which is a violation of truth. If children early "go astray, speaking lies," there is one reason for the fact, which ought more frequently to be assigned. It is this: respected and respectable friends, instructors and parents *teach* them falsehood. *Parents teach* their children falsehood? *Friends and instructors*, too? Undoubtedly. *Intentionally* teach them falsehood? Far from it. But they teach them falsehood in a look, in a forgotten promise, in hasty expressions, in evasive answers, in overwrought civilities, in the use of figurative language, and in rules and instructions given, but violated by their own example. In these, deny it who can, they *teach* them falsehood. The assertion is capable of proof beyond a reasonable doubt. Now, it is the duty of every teacher, to counteract, as far as she may be able, the bad influences, from whatever cause or quarter arising, which tend to lead the minds and hearts of children from the simplicity, beauty and loveliness of truth. It is her duty, to do what she can to bring the minds and hearts of children into a state so morally transparent, that whatever is operating there may be seen and understood. And her own moral character, as that of every father and mother, should be equally transparent to children. How far the encouragement and exercise of a spirit of emulation, by promised rewards for excellence in scholarship, go to counteract that love and influence of the ingenuous, of the benevolent and the true, whose value is beyond all praise, I shall not now offer an opinion. A teacher should act the part of a judicious parent, in bringing out the child's character, and usefully operating upon it. This, as far as possible, she will do by the presentation of moral motives. With judicious parents, she can thus act in useful concert. And her intercourse with parents, in relation to their children's dispositions and characters, should be open and free. By kindness, consistency, and manifest solicitude for their benefit, she should so secure to herself the confidence of the chil-

dren, that they will voluntarily disclose to her their tendencies to wrong-doing, as well as their good purposes and inclinations, and unbar to her every avenue to their hearts and characters.

Among their early moral lessons, children should be taught, that they were designed for exertion, improvement and usefulness. From the first, their teachings should directly tend to make them industrious, methodical, benevolent, temperate and pure. They should be early taught to class avarice and selfishness, envy and revenge, slander and uncharitableness, with the enemies of all that is truly good and beautiful in morals. They should be early led to understand what is meant by the worth and loss of principle and character; to understand how important is subordination of the animal part to the spiritual,—of the passions to the high powers of their nature. The teacher will find it necessary to apply excitements, checks and balances, to suit the different temperaments, more or less intellectual, moral and animal, on which, in the line of her profession, she is to operate. She will not find in children every thing fitted to her hand, and only the good, the true, and the lovely. She will find the perverse, the false, and the obstinate. She will find, in many, that to be corrected, and that to be supplied, which is necessary to make them what they were intended to be and to become. And children should early be taught what is meant by self-government and the duty of submission to reasonable restraint. Undue indulgence, the resolution to gratify all the imaginary as well as the real wants of children, rarely, I may safely say, *never*, fails to injure them. In this way, many are taught to be exclusively selfish, and to disregard, as they advance in life, the interests and rights of others. With considerations like these, the duties of female teachers of common schools are connected.

With the law of kindness, in all its applications, children cannot too early be made acquainted; for kindness, rightly understood, is classed high among the virtues. They should receive seasonable lessons relating to their treatment of the

various grades of animals below them. Many are there, in mature years, who are relentless and unfeeling to their own species, because in early life they were unfeeling in their treatment of irrational animals. Children should be taught from infancy never to give unnecessary pain to any beings that have life; never unnecessarily to interfere with their possessions and rights. But, with many, how different is the fact! What an amount of suffering is occasioned to the lower classes of earth's inhabitants, by men in whose minds cruelty to animals was not early associated with feelings of disapprobation and abhorrence! And how many young children, with apparent indifference,—it may be added, with real pleasure,—inflict, on various species of unoffending and inoffensive animals, the severest tortures, because they think not on the subject, as morally wrong; because they think not that such animals have sensibility to pain; or because they have not been taught to consider the cruelty, the criminality of such acts! A female teacher, rightly qualified, will find it among her duties, to give early lessons on this important and too much neglected subject.

Children, as soon as they can understand the thought, should be taught to think on the Author of their being, with reverence, love and gratitude. They should be early led to contemplate and admire the character, to know and obey the moral precepts of Christ. They should exhibit, from the first moments of their moral agency and responsible character, the ornament of a contented, pacific, equitable, benevolent and forgiving temper. They should be taught to consider the present state, with all its advantages and pleasures, as the mere beginning in the progress of mental and moral culture; and to consider the *manner* of this beginning, and the amount of this culture, immeasurably important, in their relation to the future. Such impressions, it is the duty of female teachers of common schools to be qualified and disposed to imprint deeply on the minds and hearts of children. The want of these, in the teacher and in the taught, cannot be supplied by all the external dec-

orations and accomplishments which human ingenuity can devise.

A few words in regard to the discipline to be administered by the female teacher of common schools. In her school, as in all other schools, there must be subordination ; the government and the governed. Her discipline should be parental ; the discipline of kindness ; never dictated by, nor exercised in anger, resentment, or revenge ; having always for its object the benefit of the delinquent. Her school-room should not be a penitentiary. She should never require young children so to nail themselves to their seats and prescribed tasks, as to associate, at that time and for ever after, with the words, teacher, school-room, and school-exercise, the feelings of dread or disgust. As a disciplinarian, she should unite mildness with dignity and resolution ; patience, discretion and good nature with authority, decision and common sense. There is an influence in the pleasant countenance, persuasive words and kind measures of a teacher, far more rational and efficient, than in repulsive language and frightful tones and gestures ; an influence far more useful than those once numerous and celebrated teachers, the Mistresses Fret and Scold, and the Masters Cross and Birch, could ever produce. There are, unquestionably, strong cases, which must be disposed of, as they can, at the discretion of teachers ; cases, in which a departure from their general usage will be necessary. Authority and subordination *must* be maintained. And there must be the infliction of punishment, varied and modified to suit the comparative urgency of the case. The obstinate, the insolent, the rebellious, must be brought to yield to the provisions and restraints of reasonable authority. But the right use of punishment, in all cases, is to administer needful medicine for the mind and character. And the character of the child, to be rightly disciplined, should be understood, in its temperament and predisposing causes ; and never should punishment exceed, in kind or degree, the nature and degree of the offence. When administered, it should be

felt by the recipient to be merited ; and with the teacher, its infliction should always be accompanied with the feeling of regret, that it is necessary.

Keeping close by the side of fact, and free from all the poetry and philosophy of theorists, we shall find in children, at an early age, and under similar external advantages, great diversity of power and temperament. We shall find among children of the same age, in various degrees of prominence, the gentle, the timid, the docile, the considerate, the contented, the kind, the disinterested, the forgiving ; and in equally various degrees, the boisterous, the untractable, the rash, the intrepid, the restless, the selfish, the obstinate, the unfeeling, the vindictive. We shall find many,—I appeal not to theory, but to fact and experience,—we shall find many, whose intellectual and moral natures yield, without much resistance, to the counsel and dictation of their passions, and become their slaves. And we shall find many, who, from an early age, keep the passions in check and under correct discipline. In them, the animal and the passionate are in due subordination to “the law of the mind.” And this is the discipline devoutly to be desired: *self-exercised, if it will be ; by the educator, if it must.*

The character, in mature life, is much influenced by the lessons received at the common or district schools. This is a consideration never to be forgotten, especially in a government like ours. Intelligence, with correct principle in the mass of the people, is necessary for the support of invaluable civil as well as religious privileges. Our citizens,—all, without exception,—should be informed as to the nature and importance of the rights of a people, choosing for and from themselves those who are to govern them. It is for the interest of every class in our widely extended community, that useful knowledge should be as far diffused as possible ; that prejudice and party views should be prevented or removed, by the prevalence of truth. In a government where “the road to promotion is open

to all," where rulers are raised to office by the voice of the majority, the majority should know how to act. The physical power of the state and nation should have that mental and moral culture, which will operate as a preventive of the violation of the rights of citizens, by contributing its aid to the administration of law, and the support of social order. And I deem our common schools, and of course the proper qualifications of those who have charge of them, immeasurably important in this relation. Whether they are all that they ought to be, at this interesting period, is worthy of every one's dispassionate consideration. With thoughts like these,—and I will not permit myself to extend them,—the duties of the female teachers of common schools are intimately connected.

I close with a single remark. In the character of female teachers of common schools should be united,—with adequate knowledge, with affable and attractive manners, with facility in teaching, with the power of adapting instruction and discipline to the subject and occasion,—those qualifications in their *moral principles and example*, which may be advantageously transferred to the young; which all reflecting and wise parents would fear not, but desire to have their children in manhood possess and imitate; and which, if generally prevalent, would promote the interests of our republican institutions.

**LECTURE VI.**

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**ON**

**THE BEST METHOD**

**OF**

**TEACHING ELOCUTION**

**IN SCHOOLS.**

**By T. D. P. STONE.**



## METHOD OF TEACHING ELOCUTION.

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THE value of true eloquence can only be estimated by its immense power. It is more dreadful to despots than opposing armies, or secret conspiracies. Philip of Macedon forgot the allied forces of the Grecian States, while he trembled at the denunciations of their orator, Demosthenes. Cæsar was absolute master of his country's fate, save when the voice of Cicero thwarted his plans. The eloquence of a single hermit aroused all Europe from the lethargy of the eleventh century, and rolled her armies, with resistless force, upon the usurpers of the Holy Land.

Eloquence, in free and enlightened communities, is a sure means of advancement to respectability and influence. In the hands of the dauntless patriot, it is a means of defence from foreign invasion and from treasonable designs. In the hands of the advocate, it is a sure supporter of injured innocence. In popular assemblies, it delights, convinces, persuades. From the pulpit, it withers vice. It pierces and probes the conscience. By the appointment and blessing of God, it aids in reforming the life and in restoring the heart to allegiance to its Maker.

It cannot be a matter of surprise, therefore, that eloquence has been eagerly sought after, in all ages. We cannot wonder

at the labors of ancient orators to attain it, nor at the influence and affluence of its successful teachers.

But, while no age has been destitute of true eloquence, while the experimental views of ancient orators are in our libraries, and, especially, while so large a portion of our countrymen actually obtain a polite education, it cannot fail to excite our astonishment and regret, that so few eloquent men adorn our public stations. There are, indeed, orators in our Congress, at our bar, and in our pulpit. But they are stars which shine alone. They are so rare, that the universal rush to hear their every effort singles them out, as objects of public curiosity.

We cannot believe, that this dearth of orators arises from physical causes. Eloquence has often been acquired by the maimed and the deformed. Yet thousands of well-balanced and educated minds, of noble, graceful forms, of melodious and powerful voices, never become eloquent. We must look to our systems of education, for the cause of this deficiency. Two radical errors seem to adhere to these systems, and to mar all efforts towards the formation of orators.

In too many of our seminaries of learning, the attention of youth is exclusively directed to mental preparation for public life. The tyro, at the academy, is taught to feel, that mind, mind *only*, makes the man. Accordingly, he plods through Latin and Greek, entirely forgetful of external cultivation. He enters college. Here, too, mind receives his whole attention. He masters mathematics, sounds the depths of philosophy, and receives his diploma, with rich stores of learning, and with a mind well-disciplined. But the poor, neglected body has been long treated as a drudge, appears jaded and worn out, and is fitted only to clog the usefulness of its possessor. Among a large portion of our college graduates, if the body has received any education, it has been merely trained to the arts of external civility, or to survive the effects of surfeitings and neglects. Three years of hard legal or theological study afford little time

or inclination for external training ; and our new-made public man stands before the community, with a form and manner so very awkward, that his excellent education is limited in its influence, if not utterly lost. The opposite extreme constitutes another radical error in many public institutions. The error of *merely* mental culture is seen, and merely external training takes its place. But puppets are not orators. Such instructions, though often popular for a time, have soon become tedious, and, what is worse, have rendered the public mind deeply prejudiced against all instruction in the art of speaking. As they have generally borne the name of lessons in elocution, that very term has shared their unpopularity. The word elocution is of itself sufficiently vague. It is defined in our best dictionaries, *pronunciation, utterance, fluent speech, expression, diction, beauty of words, flow of language, speaking, and eloquence*. If we append to this string of definitions the unearthly articulations and wild, yet restrained and stiff contortions, which have sometimes borne this name, who would not rejoice at the banishment both of the term and the art? Eloquence is the power of persuasion by public address. This power requires thought, and the expression of thought. Rhetoric and logic embrace the *preparation and arrangement of thought*. The term elocution is applied to the expression or delivery of thought.

I. In offering suggestions respecting the best method of teaching elocution in schools, it seems necessary, first, to establish the position, that true eloquence requires good elocution ; for otherwise, such instruction should certainly be dispensed with in our schools.

A powerful impression is often produced upon the public mind by thought thrown out by the pen or the press. The mere reading of glowing thoughts, without any effort at effect, has often excited deep feeling in popular assemblies. And powerful minds often exert immense influence, in connection with uncouth habits of elocution. These facts have been used

by many, as proof that eloquence is unconnected with elocution, or at least may exist without it. I would not deny, that a kind of eloquence may exist without correct elocution. There may be a combination of *circumstances*, which may of themselves convince and persuade. If the ocean is foaming and heaving before us, the storm increasing, night gathering, and the distant blue lights from the bows of a wrecking vessel catch our eye, we are convinced of the existence of danger, and we are persuaded to rush to the rescue. If we look at the definition of eloquence, and at the impression of such a scene upon our minds, we may pronounce this to be the eloquence of circumstances. Mere weight of character may give a poor speaker a great degree of persuasive power, or eloquence. The words of Washington would have carried authority with them, however delivered. Mere force of thought may produce irresistible impression,—as in the speeches of Brougham,—without either effort or art in delivery. But who would assert, that good elocution would detract any thing from the power of favorable circumstances, personal influence, or native energy of mind? And who can safely augur to himself such circumstances, influence, or energy? By true eloquence I mean—the highest power of public persuasion; and I wish to prove, that this cannot exist without correct elocution. If it can thus exist, all efforts to teach elocution are utterly without an object. It is evident, that the *manner* in which thought is expressed in public addresses, must mean *something* of itself. Were it expressed upon the printed page, the form of the type and color of the paper would not of themselves modify its meaning. But the living voice, the countenance, the human form, must express *something*, aside from the thought uttered. Let the voice be weak, the countenance languid, and the body appear debilitated, and these circumstances alone would awaken emotions of pity or disgust, which must have some effect upon the thought expressed. Every position of the body, every appearance of the countenance, every tone of the voice, conveys

favorable or unfavorable impressions to an audience. Whatever causes these impressions is called elocution. Whatever causes impressions favorable to the object of the speaker, is called *correct elocution*. To insist, therefore, that true eloquence requires correct elocution, is merely to assert, that, in order to persuade public assemblies with the greatest success, a speaker must be able, by his mode of address, to secure their most favorable attention to his object; and this must be evident to every mind. But those who have been most successful in the practice of eloquence, have left behind them their testimony to the correctness of this position. Demosthenes felt, that all his power depended upon delivery, and placed it first, second and third, in his list of qualifications for eloquence. Eschines, as he rehearsed that famous oration of Demosthenes, which had procured his banishment, stated his full conviction, that the *manner* in which Demosthenes had delivered it was even superior to the thought it contained. Cicero urges upon the reader of his Treatise on Oratory, the vast importance of action in speaking. Both Demosthenes and Cicero, the princes of ancient eloquence, were far more remarkable for their attention to the manner of speaking than to the composition of their orations. Quintilian, in his Institutes of Oratory, dwells upon the delivery of thought with more minuteness and interest than upon style and composition.

II. If, then, true eloquence requires correct elocution, it becomes necessary to inquire, in the second place, upon what correct elocution depends? How are we to know what mode of address will cause favorable impressions upon an audience?

To answer this question satisfactorily, we must ascertain what mode of address has been, and is still most successful. Various methods have been tested by experiment; and their success is a sure criterion of their value. These methods may be classed under three heads. 1. A careless delivery, which makes no effort to secure success. 2. A style of delivery founded upon artificial rules; and, 3. A system of elocution drawn from the instincts and universal taste of mankind.

We have specimens of the first method in the incipient effort of every school-boy, and in the coarse speeches often heard in the debates of uneducated freemen at our town meetings, and sometimes met with among legislators and senators, advocates and clergymen. Demosthenes gave the Athenians a specimen of such speaking, when he addressed them for the first time, and when he was hissed from the assembly, for his awkwardness. The result of this method, unless sustained by remarkable circumstances, great influence, or gigantic mental power, has always been total failure. But notwithstanding its poor success, it has found support from a few influential writers, and from the larger portion of our public men. The second method, founded upon artificial rules, originated with good speakers, who have been induced to regard their own manner as a correct model for imitation. They have, accordingly, *written out their own practice*, as a system for others. In one or two instances, such systems have claimed to be founded upon nature,—upon some supposed principles of beauty of motion, or upon the equipoise of the body. In one system, the outline and limits of gestures have carefully been graduated by the segments of a sphere, according to the author's view of graceful curvilinear motion.

Dr. Whately has very justly remarked upon this artificial style of elocution, that whoever has learned it, so as to practise it, will hardly fail to betray the effort, which will always give offence when perceived. Where do we find successful speakers, who adopt and follow such rules? If they exist, they are certainly rarely met with. Public assemblies are not pleased either with awkwardness, or with the appearance of effort which artificial elocution exhibits.

The third system, to which I have referred, as drawn from the instinct and universal taste of mankind, takes it for granted, that there are certain expressive gestures, and sounds, which are instinctively understood and felt by the whole human family. It also presupposes, that the taste of mankind, in regard

to elocution, is uniform in all important points, though with different degrees of cultivation. The student in elocution is directed to learn what these natural, instinctive expressions are, and to avoid whatever is shocking to the general taste. He is not to learn this from any particular treatise, but by observation and practice. The fact, that the greatest orators of antiquity adopted this system, and have recommended it to their pupils, speaks loudly in its favor. The success of Whitefield, as a preacher,—of Lord Chatham, as a legislator,—of Patrick Henry, as an advocate,—and of Garrick, upon the stage,—all of whom adopted these principles of elocution,—assures us, that similar efforts are crowned with perfect success in modern times.

III. If true eloquence requires good elocution, and if this depends upon universal instinct and taste, it becomes important to inquire, in the third place, whether the practical knowledge of this instinct and taste can be acquired and cultivated? It has been thus acquired and cultivated. Of course, it can be again. A raw youth stood up before a Grecian assembly, to plead with the people for the restoration of property, which had been taken from him by his fraudulent guardian. But he was compelled by ridicule to retire from the audience. His speaking and appearance were intolerable. As he was returning home, full of chagrin at his disappointment, a stage actor, who had studied natural elocution, met him, and persuaded him to attempt to learn the art of speaking. The youth was deformed, and his tongue stammered. Still he followed the actor's kind advice. And years of patient effort transformed that disappointed youth into the orator Demosthenes, and proved beyond dispute, that the principles of elocution can be learned. Cicero, as we are informed by Dr. Middleton, spent a portion of his time daily, during the most busy years of his life, in practising declamation, under the instruction of the best teachers of elocution. Cicero must have known whether such instruction was valuable; and he would never have thus de-

voted his time to it, had he held it in low estimation. He had been studying elocution from his boyhood, under the best masters, and still he pursues the study through middle life, even to declining age.

IV. If, then, correct elocution can be learned, it may be made evident, in the fourth place, that it must be learned in early life, or not at all. All habits are soon fixed; and habits of speaking, when once fixed, are rarely, if ever, eradicated, or changed. Every effort to reform them, in riper years, is marked by awkwardness, and proves a failure. Both the great orators of antiquity, to whom I have referred, commenced the study of elocution in early life. Lord Mansfield spent his boyhood in repeating "to the winds which fanned his native mountains" the orations of ancient orators. Whitefield was the best speaker in the grammar school, where he commenced his studies. Quintilian recommends, that youth, who are training for orators, should spend much of their time in declamation, if they would secure success. The whole history of eloquence proves the value of instruction in elocution in childhood, as eloquent men of all ages have, in most instances, enjoyed such instruction, and professed to derive great advantage from it.

It is almost impossible for gentlemen in our public professions to pay any attention to elocution, for want of time. In our colleges, little systematic instruction is generally given, which can compare with the elaborate efforts made in the ancient Grecian and Roman elocution schools. Such instruction might be given in colleges, without bringing mental culture into collision with it. But the fact, that young gentlemen, who enter college, have often already formed their habits of speaking, seems to be a serious obstacle to the success of such instruction, if it were offered to them. Elocution should be taught, then, in our academies and high schools, in order that educated men may acquire it before it is too late for them to form correct habits. A large amount of talent is undoubtedly

lost to the community, because many uneducated but thinking men have never learned, and do not dare to express their thoughts in public. There is scarcely a man in the community, who has not, at town meetings, district school meetings, or society meetings, frequent opportunities to speak in public, with a happy influence, if he knew how to do it. This large and respectable portion of our citizens receive their education mostly at district schools. These schools, then, should afford them facilities for learning to speak well. When this is done, and only then, will most of our public men be eloquent men, and our citizens generally be capable of exerting their full share of public influence.

We are now prepared to inquire, what is the best method of teaching elocution in schools?

My apology for occupying so much time with previous remarks, in lieu of entering immediately upon the subject assigned by the committee, is simply this. One of the most eminent writers of rhetoric, Dr. Whately, has taken great pains to prove, that all instruction in elocution is worse than useless; and a large number of experienced and influential teachers fall in with this opinion, both in theory and practice. If this opinion be correct, if elocution ought not to be taught in schools, it were a mere waste of time, and a severe trial to the patience of any audience, to discuss the best method of teaching it. But if true eloquence requires good elocution; if good elocution is founded upon the instinct and general taste of mankind; if the knowledge of this instinct can be acquired and cultivated; and if this must be done in early life, or not at all,—our schools should certainly embrace it among their objects of attention, and the best method of paying attention to it becomes an important subject of investigation. The best method is that which is most successful in forming good speakers. It would be interesting and profitable, to examine at length the various modes of instruction in elocution, which have been popular in different ages. A glance at efforts made in the subterranean study of Demosthenes, and a view of the elocution schools, in

which Cicero was a pupil, would be peculiarly appropriate to the subject before us. But we have not time for such a review of them upon the present occasion. For a similar reason, it is impossible to examine and compare, with any degree of accuracy, the various methods now in common use in Europe, and in our own country. I must content myself with offering a few practical suggestions upon the subject, hoping that they will be useful to teachers, who have not found time to pay particular attention to elocution, and relying upon the candor of more experienced teachers, if these suggestions should seem to them trite or irrelevant.

1. I would first suggest, that success in teaching elocution cannot be expected, unless sufficient time in school be regularly devoted to declamation. In many of our academies, the afternoon of Wednesday is constantly appropriated to speaking. But part of it, however, is generally occupied with this exercise. School-boys rarely feel disposed to curtail their play-hours for the purpose of declaiming; and we can hardly wonder, that a social party, an afternoon walk, or a retired study, should sometimes prove more attractive than dry declamation, even to the teacher. The speaking of Wednesday afternoon, therefore, often degenerates into a dull rehearsal of stale speeches and poems, more disgusting than profitable to all concerned. The habit of appropriating this half day to elocution, recommends itself, by affording a timely and suitable relaxation from hard study in the middle of the week. It might probably be thus employed in all our academies, high schools, and winter district schools, with advantage. Female scholars might read, at their seats, a poetical or descriptive selection in alternation with the declamations of boys, and thus train their own rhetorical powers, and add interest to the occasion. But, whatever time is selected, ample time must be regularly devoted to elocution, or all attention to it is lost. No study requires more frequent and constant practice. Cicero declaimed daily. Youth, who aim to be good speakers, should certainly have

opportunity to declaim once each week or fortnight. This might be afforded them, even in our district schools, if the whole of the afternoon of Wednesday were thus occupied by short declamations.

2. I would suggest, in the second place, that teachers should see that suitable pieces are spoken. Much depends, as to success in speaking, upon the piece selected. How often do we hear lads, whose intellectual eyes are hardly opened, descanting, in declamation, upon the discoveries of Newton, the intricacies of Locke, or pronouncing the eulogy of some great man, of whose history they know nothing, and this, too, in language which they cannot understand! Such exercises are only calculated to make them fond of displaying self,—are only suited to strengthen their lungs, and train them for showmen or auctioneers. Youth generally find it difficult to select pieces for declamation. They feel incompetent, and they really are so. The selection of their pieces imposes, it is true, no small task upon teachers. But the best method of teaching elocution seems to require this exertion on their part; and the success of such efforts would soon more than repay the faithful teacher.

As to the kind of pieces suitable for declamation, I would suggest, that they should always be intelligible to the speaker, or explained to him; that they should be capable of interesting his feelings; and interesting to his associates, who constitute his audience. Such pieces abound in the popular reading-books and periodicals of the day, and may be obtained, in any number, by almost every teacher, as they may be either prose or poetry, if a *tone* be avoided in speaking the latter. But they should always be short,—very short; not exceeding one or two minutes. Experiment has proved, that pupils improve most rapidly, from short and frequent declamations.

3. I would suggest, thirdly, that the object of a declamation should be distinctly explained to youthful speakers. If the practical use of other studies should be exhibited as an inducement to exertion, students in elocution should see the value of

eloquence. They ought not to feel that they declaim for display, as too many infantile orators are taught to do, for the gratification of a fond mother's vanity. Boys should be taken to public assemblies, and should be led to feel that a few more years will find them standing up and speaking in public meetings. They should be trained to feel, that true eloquence is one of the proudest distinctions of a freeman; and they should be encouraged to aim at it, from the very beginnings of their education. They should be brought to feel also, that the power of speaking well is not a mere gift of nature,—but the reward of patient effort.

It is a prevalent opinion, among parents and teachers, that peculiar natural talents are indispensable in a good speaker. In compliance with this opinion, while no effort is made to discover whether boys are natural mechanics, natural farmers, or natural merchants, they are often watched, in their first speaking, to ascertain whether they are natural orators. This opinion is exceedingly injurious in its effect upon teachers, as it affords but little inducement to cultivate a talent, which must, in their opinion, thrive unaided, if it thrives at all. It would be sacrilege, they think, to interfere with nature's operations. Thus many a teacher has escaped the task of teaching elocution, and has been equally scrupulous to avoid the exposure of his own ignorance of the subject. But this opinion is still more injurious in its influence upon youth. They admire the speaking of their associate and sigh for similar skill. But they feel that they cannot speak well now, and they make no effort to learn to speak, because they suppose the talent is beyond their reach; they fully believe that they were born without it. Youth should not only feel confident that they can learn to speak, but it is also highly important, that they should perceive that frequent declamation will eventually make them good speakers. They should understand *how* it will produce this result.

4. I would offer a fourth suggestion, that the great princi-

ples of elocution, should be taught theoretically in connection with declamation, that pupils may thus see for themselves the manner in which frequent and correct practice will form good speakers. It cannot be inappropriate to inquire here, what these great principles are? Elocution is the medium of communication between an eloquent mind and an intelligent audience. To be a good medium, it must be a perfect medium. It must convey to an audience the whole action of the mind. It must catch not thought alone, but feelings, emotions, passions, as they accompany thought, and throw them out in bold relief for general inspection. It must not conceal, nor distort, nor misrepresent a single feeling, if it would do all its duty. It is not theatrical speaking. That is a *counterfeit* of emotions. It is not pantomimic speaking. That *describes* emotions, by exhibiting their effects. Thought is expressed in speaking, by the distinct, and grammatical, and correct pronunciation of words, which are the artificial signs of thought. The emotions of a speaker are expressed by certain changes of voice and personal appearance, and by certain gestures, which are instinctively understood as the signs of emotion. The principles of elocution are nothing more than a full description of these changes, with a general view of the manner in which they are employed in expressing emotions. The principal changes of the voice are those discovered by Walker, which he named inflections, and in addition to them, the variations of voice, called high, low, loud, soft, quick, slow, lively, and pathetic. After a lad is able to make these changes at will, he may easily learn when to make them, by careful practice and observation of nature, aided by a skillful teacher. The changes of personal appearance, caused by emotions, cannot well be classified nor described. But they are easily perceived, and may be easily acquired. The general position of the body alone often actually delineates the state of the mind. Goliath of Gath did not stoop, as he defied the armies of the living God. The youthful David did not advance to meet the son of Anak, with the

light step of the merry dance. Courage holds the body firm and erect. Anger distends the chest, causes the lip to quiver, and the eye to flash. Pity stoops forward with tearful, sympathising eyes. Energy nerves every sinew, and renders every motion elastic. Every child understands the meaning of a wrinkled brow, a downcast eye, a smiling lip, a tear, and a stiff expression of scorn upon the lip. By early practice, youth may form the habit of encouraging these natural expressions. We must not forget, however, that the object of such study is to correct faults, and not to express what is not felt. Most of our public speakers are ignorant of what they do express by their appearance and gestures. They do not feel at ease in speaking, merely because their appearance and gestures speak a language, which they themselves do not understand. They are in the situation of the painter who is compelled to use his pencil,—who is conscious that he does not express what he designs to express upon his canvass,—but who is utterly ignorant of the use and combination of colors. The successful painter must make nature his guide. But he cannot do this without instruction and practice. The orator must follow nature; and he, too, can only do it by study and practice. All gestures are either emphatic or descriptive. When emphatic, they must exactly accompany the word emphasized; when descriptive, must still pursue gracefulness of form and motion, that they may not disgust the taste of an audience. They are easily acquired, and demand little attention, excepting to the shape and position of the hand and arm. In regard to this, universal taste seems to prescribe, that the palm of the hand be generally visible, and the bend of the elbow and wrist gently curved. The remnants of sculpture and painting which are extant from the ruins of antiquity, afford proof, that in this respect, at least, ancient and modern taste exactly coincide.

5. I would suggest, in the fifth place, that suitable criticism should be made upon each speaker, at the close of his declama-

tion. Such criticisms when made, are generally too vague to be of any real value. Boys are often told, after having declaimed, "you are too tame," "your gesticulation is too careless," "you should speak more naturally," and "with more animation." The pupil takes his seat, with no better idea of his teacher's meaning, than he would have obtained from a criticism in Arabic. Such a course, pursued from week to week, confirms every bad habit, and leads the youthful speaker to neglect all efforts to improve. He regards speaking as a task, and in after life avoids it, if he can, or disgraces himself, if he attempts it. Were teachers to illustrate faults, by imitation and example on the stage, the foundation might be laid, in numberless instances for eloquence of the highest order. The usual faults of young speakers, are boisterous tones,—too few or too many gestures,—want of propriety in general appearance, and the use of gestures which are misplaced or improper. It cannot be denied, that some individuals avoid these faults more readily than others; but every youth needs some degree of criticism, and cannot improve much in speaking without it. I would name, as my last suggestion, the importance of occasional public exhibitions in our schools, at which declamations should form the principal exercises. Two prominent advantages would result from this measure. Parents would be induced, by such exercises, to visit their schools at least once during each season. By this means, also, an opportunity would be afforded to pupils, of declaiming before larger and more respectable audiences, than their weekly speaking could draw together, which would induce greater efforts on their part, in preparing declamations.

Before closing these remarks, I would beg leave, earnestly to recommend to my associates in the delightful but responsible duties of the teacher, more particular and practical attention to this subject. It depends upon us to decide, in a great degree, whether the clergymen, the advocates and the statesmen of the next generation,—all of whom are now under our instruction, shall be poor speakers or eloquent men. We shall decide this

question, not by indolent wishes, but by neglect, or by active exertion. Without such exertion on our part, as will enable us to understand, practise, and teach elocution, the minds which we train must sink into listless obscurity, or, if they shine at all, must shed but a glimmering, darkened light.

**LECTURE VII.**

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**ON THE**

**INFLUENCE OF INTELLECTUAL ACTION**

**ON**

**CIVILIZATION.**

**By H. R. CLEAVELAND.**



## INFLUENCE OF INTELLECTUAL ACTION ON CIVILIZATION.

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I HAVE selected, for this occasion, the subject which has just been named, because I believe it is one of great interest to teachers. The profession of a teacher exists in none but civilized countries. Among barbarians, the mode of bringing up children resembles the education which the brute creation give their young, in one very important particular, viz., the parent teaches his offspring no more than he had himself learned from his father; and thus generation succeeds to generation without improvement, and remaining always at nearly the same point of knowledge and intelligence. As soon as the desire becomes general, in any nation, of giving children an education superior to that which their parents received, just so soon will the work of civilization be commenced; teaching then becomes a profession, and an impulse is given throughout the community, which savages never feel.

Teachers, as a class, are called upon to do much for the cause of civilization; for their great duty is, to arouse action of mind;—and civilization is intellectual action. A civilized nation is one in which there is constantly at work an intelligent, enterprising, busy spirit, which not only keeps up with the

aroused mental action than in heroism and self-devotion. He who utters the words of truth and power, who inspires his countrymen with the admiration of noble achievements, who awakens among them a taste for more elevated enjoyment, and who, by the glory of his name, perpetuates the fame of his country in all nations and throughout all ages, is no less a patriot than the man who buckles on the sword, and dies for his native land, on the field of battle.

Briefly, then, the most civilized nation is that which can boast of the best specimens of human nature in the greatest numbers,—of men who are fulfilling best the duties assigned them, as inhabitants of the earth,—especially the all-important and sublime duty of self-culture,—who are endeavoring to manifest in themselves the full capacities and destinies of their race, and by the just balance of character, and a full development of all the powers, are seeking to attain to perfect manhood.

Civilization is to be sought among men, not among things. It depends upon the inward universe more than the world abroad. It is the action of mind upon matter, not matter upon mind.

The great principle of civilization, action of mind, constitutes equally the vital energy of its grand elements, the existence and diffusion of a high moral sense, civil liberty, and a system of regular education.

In naming the first of these, as an element of civilization, I may meet with contradiction; I may be reminded, that the greatest learning, refinement and elegance have been not unfrequently accompanied by dissolute morals; that depravity of every sort is found nearest to the highest refinement;—all are congregated in large cities, and exist side by side; and that it seems almost like a fatal destiny, which clings to elegance and luxury, that they must be ever attended by noxious and disgusting vices. The most frightful enormities which stain the pages of history, have been perpetrated more frequently by the

rich and great than the humble and obscure. Crime has found a home more often in the palace than the cottage. And, indeed, what is the history of monarchs, but the history of crime? Where is tragedy, of the deepest kind, to be found, but in royal families, from the days of the Atridae to the present time? But it should be remembered, that the cause of humanity has not been the most promoted by the inmates of palaces. I thank God, when I look upon the host of mighty geniuses who stand foremost in the vast pilgrimage of mankind, that they have, almost without an exception, been enlisted on the side of virtue. As I gaze through the long vista of past ages, the forms of those whom an undying fame proclaims the benefactors of man, appear in glorious array before me. Socrates, and Tully, and Origen, and Justin, Dante, Angelo, Copernicus, Columbus, Faustus, Luther, Bacon, Milton, Kepler, Newton, Washington, the sages and patriots of all nations and ages, the noble army of martyrs,—titles, compared with which principalities, thrones and dominions sink into insignificance. Names which are written in the book of life rise up to the view, no longer wearing the badges of toil and suffering, but clothed in white, with crowns of gold on their heads, and gathered round the throne of Him that liveth for ever.

It is, indeed, a mournful truth, that the higher classes, throughout refined and polished Europe, as they monopolize the wealth, seem equally to monopolize the vices of the country. But the error of those who infer from this fact, that immorality necessarily accompanies civilization, consists in supposing, that the refinement and polish of European society, where they are united with gross vices, have any effect upon civilization. A hereditary and exclusive aristocracy cannot exist for any great length of time in the habits of vicious indulgence which characterize but too large a portion of the nobility of Europe, without degenerating into a dwarfish and powerless race, which, though still, perhaps, preserving a certain elegance of manner, can aid nothing to promote the interests of man.

With minds burdened by the inheritance of successive generations of infirmity, cramped in education, paralyzed by voluptuous habits, sunk in a moral and intellectual torpor, and dreaming only of self-gratification, they indeed have but little of civilization, except the name. Strip them of their possessions, drive them from their palaces, take away the splendors by which they are surrounded, and they will become the scorn and mockery of the meanest of their hirelings.

How much, too, of the elegance by which the higher classes are surrounded, is in reality conferred by the industry and talents of those who occupy, nominally, a far lower rank ! Their halls, which the sculptor and painter have vied to decorate, their gorgeous drapery, their storied plate, their glittering libraries, all the external insignia of refinement, are the result of minds more active than their own.

Happily for mankind, the vices of society have, in most instances, been confined to a comparatively small class. But when once they have become general, and the infection has spread through the mass of people, slavery, ignorance and barbarity have followed fast upon their footsteps. Thus fell the republics of Athens and Rome ; thus fell Venice, and Genoa, and Florence. The result is inevitable. A degraded state of morals, and the prevalence of vice, weaken and destroy the energy of mind upon which civilization rests ; and when this is gone, when the vital principle of improvement and advance has forsaken a nation, all is lost ; and the foul harpies of despotism come to build their nests amidst the ruins of society.

The second remarkable element of civilization, is the enjoyment of the rights of freemen ; among which, I regard as most important the unrestrained operation of thought. The greatest wrong that tyrants have it in their power to inflict, is, paralyzing the action of intellect,—educating men to be slaves,—annihilating the self-respect which belongs to those who are blessed with liberty,—enfeebling the soul by the shackle they impose upon it in its very infancy. It is the curse of despots,

that they can only rule over an enfeebled and puny race. The finest manifestations of human nature are not to be found in their dominions; for they cannot ripen into the fulness and strength of manhood, under the blighting influence of intellectual slavery.

The progress of civilization is inevitably retarded by the action of principles, which confine the mind within any prescribed limits, or which assign to thought the channels in which it must flow. Where the subjects of thought, of the deepest interest to man,—which are, undoubtedly, religion and politics,—are zealously guarded from popular discussion, we must expect to find a corresponding deficiency of character in those who are thus secluded from fields of thought, which open so vast a prospect. Accordingly, we may find, in the most despotic countries, those who have cultivated and improved science; we may find scholars, who are versed in the learning of ancient times; philosophers, who penetrate deeply into the soul; poets, whose accents fall on the ear in sweetest harmony; but we must not look in such a country for *men*, in the highest sense of the term;—for those whose minds have grown up in the fulness of their natural proportions, and have been developed in the image of the Deity; who have learned to recognise the dignity and the glory of their place in the scale of creation, and have discovered the holiness and sublimity of their mission upon earth,—the vastness of their duties,—the awfulness of their responsibilities,—the splendor of their destinies. Alas! their “star-eyed science” has too often but brought them back “the tidings of despair;” their scholars have been blind to the lessons of freedom, which glow on the ancient page; their philosophers have failed to discover, that the soul belongs to none but God; the lips of their bards have never been touched with fire from the sacred altars of liberty.

There have, indeed, been found, even in the most enslaved communities, men, whose destiny is greatness,—who have risen, by godlike energy, above the crushing weight of despot-

ism, and asserted their rank in the creation. But, for one mind that has triumphed over these tremendous obstacles, there have been millions of noble spirits, who have mourned, in hopeless inactivity, over their degraded and humiliating subjection, and yet who, under happier influences, might have been the ornament and glory of their race. Like the imprisoned genii of the casket, they, whose forms might have reached the skies, in their majestic proportions, have been narrowed and cramped into the diminutive space assigned by their tyrants.

The same effect is produced upon the mind, from whatever cause the freedom of thought is destroyed. Arbitrary and tyrannical governments are not the only enemies to the unrestrained action of mind; there are other engines of despotism, more powerful than censorships, dungeons and faggots; there are other fetters, stronger than the chains of tyrants. The power of public sentiment has effected, in some communities, what the dread of a monarch's wrath could never do. The bitterest persecution is that which arises from a people, not from governments. It has been said, that sects thrive by the opposition they experience; but there is one kind of opposition which no sect can resist,—the determined and zealous persecution of society, of the mass. But I have not time to dwell on this topic. I pass on, with one warning voice. Is not the freedom of thought cramped among us, by the tremendous power of public sentiment? Have not our fellow-citizens, whose rights are undeniable, been conquered and held in subjection, have not societies been put down, have not sects been persecuted successfully, have not the dearest privileges of man been violated in our community, by the resistless operation of this power? In proportion as such influences are allowed to fetter and paralyze the mind, just so much shall we be carried back towards barbarity. We have much to fear; but, on the other hand, we have much to encourage us. Let those minds, whose duty it is to give the direction to public sentiment, rather than to be guided by it, come boldly forward, and assert

the dignity and freedom of the intellect, which are in danger of being trampled upon,—let them nobly burst the fetters which threaten to become riveted upon us,—let them brave the hisses of a mob and the clamors of the press, while they vindicate their inherent rights. I wish not to appear as the champion of any sect or party. I am not prepared to say, that those who have been persecuted have not been in error. But I do wish to assert the dearest of human rights,—the freedom of thought. Better that a thousand erring and fanatical sects should exist among us, than that one should be put down by persecution.

The third distinguishing element of civilization, is a regular system of education for children.

The great object, in the education of young persons in civilized countries, is to develop the powers by exercise. Education is mental action ; and its perfection depends upon calling forth all the faculties, in their just proportions. Compared with this object, the amount of knowledge acquired by children is of very trifling importance. Much is afterwards forgotten, and much is utterly neglected, and therefore of no use. Of how little use, for instance, to men in the usual occupations of busy life, is their school-boy knowledge of algebra, or the ancient languages ! How seldom are they brought into notice ! Of how little consequence do they seem, though gained by years of painful assiduity ! And useless, indeed, would they be, had they not been acquired with toil and trouble. It is the power of mind, gained by such labor, that rewards the young student for his pains ;—the command of his faculties, the athletic vigor of his intellect, the capacity of thinking, comprehending, judging, acquiring, that repay him tenfold for his toil. On this ground, I believe, a powerful argument may rest, in favor of the study of the classics ; as it would not be difficult to show, that they exercise the various powers of mind, more than any other pursuit which is fitted for childhood.

The distinction which I have here made, in the objects of

education, is one of great importance, and ought to be well understood ; namely, that the great end of education is not so much to fill the mind with information, as to call forth its powers ; not to regard the intellect so much as a passive receptacle, into which must be poured as much knowledge as possible, but rather as a powerful agent, which needs only to receive the command of its faculties, and to become accustomed to their use, in order to grasp, with resistless strength, the whole circle of good learning, and mould into forms of new beauty and usefulness the knowledge it possesses. And yet, how often is the assiduous teacher censured and abused, because his pupils are found to be ignorant of a few facts, when his efforts have been successfully directed to the all-important object of so exercising the mind, as to enable them to enter, with a firm step and a strong arm, into the vast field of knowledge, and gather its choicest fruits at their will !

Much has been said about the power of knowledge ; but, with many, the term is probably vague, and conveys no definite idea. This power has been differently regarded, at different times. It has been even looked upon with superstitious reverence, as enabling the possessor to overcome the laws of nature. Three centuries ago, the power of knowledge might have been described as the superhuman capacity with which the alchemist and the astrologer were invested ; the power to command the elements, to arrest the progress of time, to read the mysterious future by the grand secrets of learning. And I am not sure, that there is not lingering in the minds of some, at the present day, a disposition to invest learning with the same mysterious virtue. Such an error, wherever it exists, cannot be too strongly opposed, because its tendency is to encourage and continue that mistaken system of education, whose object is to crowd as much knowledge as possible into the mind of a child, without reference to the higher purpose of developing the native powers.

There is no greater mistake than that of supposing, that

knowledge, in itself, is power; that the mere acquiring of a certain number of facts, or committing a certain number of rules, or even storing the mind with the lore of all the learned, is alone able to confer power. Learning is a dead weight upon the soul, unless it is quickened by thought. It possesses no intrinsic efficacy. To some intellects, which have never been roused to action, it is but foolishness; to others, it is immortal energy. The fall of an apple, to an ordinary mind, seems but the most trivial of nature's operations; but it suggests to a Newton the most sublime system that the intellect of man ever grasped. The power of truth, of learning, consists, then, in this, that there is a principle innate in the mind, which meets it; that it is welcomed and inspired with vital energy, by life-giving thought; that it calls forth a kindred power, and finds a response in the depths of the soul;—in a word, that it awakens action of mind; and in proportion as this is accomplished, just in the same proportion will be the power of learning. Childhood is not to be regarded as the time of life most suited to the reception of knowledge. There is more danger, in the present systems of education, that the intellect will be weighed down by a mass of communicated information, than that it will be left destitute. Let the mind be first taught to use its own powers, and then it will educate itself.

The power of knowledge, as thus explained, becomes greater, the more widely it is diffused. The greater number of minds that are aroused to thought, the greater will be the power actually possessed by man. When we remember how long facts of the most common occurrence were before the eyes of men, yet conveyed no deep intelligence to the soul,—when we observe how civilization has stood for ages on the very verge of vast discoveries, yet has failed to take the last short step, we can comprehend how feeble is knowledge, unless it is moulded by thought. As we look upon the history of discovery, it seems as if men had remained almost wilfully ignorant of truths and principles, which had power even to re-model

society ; we behold them lingering round the unseen shores of discovery for thousands of years,—Cicero absolutely inventing movable types, and yet the art of printing not found out till fifteen hundred years afterwards,—Plato descanting upon the wonderful properties of the magnet, and yet its polarity remaining undiscovered through the dark ages,—the mathematicians of Egypt and Greece calculating eclipses, yet waiting for Copernicus to describe the solar system,—the Chinese nation using gunpowder for centuries, without applying it to military use. As we review all these wonders in the history of great discoveries, we cannot but acknowledge that mental activity was wanting in the world, that it slumbered for so many ages on the verge of such knowledge. The intellectual spark must be received and cherished by kindred fire, or it will be lost on the cold, dull waste of ignorance and indifference. And in this, perhaps, may be discovered the reason, why certain periods have seemed so astonishingly prolific in great men, and others so destitute of them. It is because there are occasionally combinations of circumstances, which have uncommon power to call forth action of mind, and still more, because great minds not only act with life-giving force upon each other, but they diffuse a portion of their energies through entire communities, arousing the activity of intellect, and unfolding the faculties by their own genial warmth.

All great discoveries, then, evidently depend less upon accident, than upon the constant and powerful action of mind, by which a proper use is made of knowledge already possessed. In this may be found the great principle of all invention or discovery ; here is the grand *arcanum*, which the occult sciences in vain promised to reveal, the magic stone, in search of which the alchemist toiled his life away ; the standing-place, which the sublime mind of Archimedes imagined, but never found, from which he might have moved the world. The mind almost recoils from its responsibilities, when we reflect upon the discoveries which are yet to be made. What tre-

mendous results may be impending over us, which one happy thought, a single hour, or perhaps only a single moment of intense thought, might enable us to accomplish! What engines of power, what command of the elements, what forms of surpassing loveliness, may be even now within our reach, if the mind were but awake to grasp them! But we may go beyond this. Thus far, the discoveries which have had most influence upon the condition of man, have been almost exclusively confined to the physical world. There is another universe, with regard to which we are still comparatively in deep ignorance; upon whose threshold, we have hardly yet entered, and in which we have, as yet, made no dazzling discoveries. It is the world of mind,—the inward universe, illimitable in extent, and eternal in duration,—the image of the all-pervading Deity. And yet how unexplored! how unknown! Shadows, clouds, and darkness still rest upon the unbounded prospect before us; and man has never penetrated them. Treasures, compared with which, mountains of gold and valleys of diamonds are as worthless dross,—forms of beauty which the earth never knew,—powers which mock at the weakness of the elements,—conceptions which pause not at the limits of the created universe,—are gathered there, and none have reached them. Here, then, are yet to be found wonders which shall far transcend in importance and vastness, all that human genius has hitherto arrived at;—here will be revealed the eternal foundations of man's nature, the primeval elements of the soul, the immortal principles which existed before the birth of time;—here are to be discovered truths which are to conquer the world, to elevate the condition of the human race; to reorganize society, to bring the earth nearer to heaven.

Such are the vast objects of education, in the highest sense of the word. Looking to the future, rather than the past; regarding knowledge already gained, as valuable chiefly for the aid it gives in gaining more, and as useful more by strengthening than by storing the mind,—while the destinies of the race

are yet unfulfilled, while there still remains any thing to be learnt, which man has not grasped, while there are discoveries still to be made, and powers still to be developed,—education will still have the same great ends in view. A single glance at the present condition of men, and their past history, will convince us how far these great purposes yet are from being accomplished; and how small is the number of active, thinking minds, compared with those who slumber through life.

It has been proved, how vastly individual power may be increased by associations. Our Bible societies, our temperance societies, our commercial companies, our associations for the accomplishment of any great project, have already performed Herculean tasks, and have clearly showed the immense superiority in point of power, which the efforts of men, acting in masses, possess, over the attempts of the same persons when not united.

But has the experiment yet been made to any extent, comparatively, of the results to be accomplished by men thinking in masses? Is not thought, thus far, almost solitary? Are not the original minds who lead the way, on the advance of society, scattered and alone, without concert, and beyond the observation of each other? If the combined efforts of philosophers have done so much to promote the cause of science, might not as much be done for moral and intellectual discoveries, by the union of talent? May not thought be responded to by thought? May not ideas be expanded and developed, as easily as facts commented upon and applied to use?

To the universal action of mind we must look, for the highest degree of refinement, knowledge and virtue of which man is capable. When the various powers, aided by all the diversities of climate, manners, tradition, language and literature, shall be brought into strenuous exertion at once, and the untried and almost inconceivable strength of the intellect of the whole world shall be brought to bear upon the most exalted subjects, then; and not till then, will the destinies of the race be accomplished.

Education, to be complete, must develop all the varied powers of mind, in their just proportion. It must act with justice to the intellect, not cramping a part of the faculties, while it nurtures others into an extraordinary and unnatural growth. In proportion as it fails in this duty, just so will the mind be found wanting in the capacity to act. And in this fact may perhaps, be discovered some of the causes of difference of opinion between men of the greatest minds. It is not uncommon to find great intellects laboring under strange and inconceivable delusions on certain points, supporting doctrines at which reason revolts, and defending inconsistencies, of which far weaker minds can perceive the absurdity. I believe, that if the cause of this is faithfully investigated, it will be found to consist in the fact, that on such points, these intellects have never been allowed to act for themselves; they have been swathed, and cramped, and fashioned, from infancy, into the deformed and unnatural shapes in which they appear, till the original form is lost, habit becomes nature, and ugliness more attractive than native beauty.

It is a remarkable fact, that in the despotic countries of Europe, where the censorship of the press exists in its strictest form, and passes its severest strictures on every thought that whispers of liberty, the Greek and Latin classics are still placed without reserve or fear into the hands of every child who is educated. There are no expurgated editions for the use of legitimacy; no skilfully selected and varied passages to suit the purposes of absolutists; no different readings for the accommodation of despotism.

As the ancient writers spoke to their countrymen, so they now speak to the subjects of legitimacy in Europe,—but they call to the deaf, and they call in vain;—they address themselves to those whose minds have never been taught to regard liberty but as an idle dream of antiquity, vain as the vision of the happy Isles and the fields of Elysium,—who have never comprehended, that freedom is a life-giving principle,

which quickens the soul, but have looked upon it rather as an impious phantom, summoned up to lure them to destruction. In no sense are the ancient languages more completely dead, than to such readers as these. Upon them, the enthusiastic sentiments of patriotism, and the tale of heroic devotion are lost,—the sublime pæans of Tyrteus, the stern virtue of Thucydides and Tacitus, the dazzling histories of Marathon and Thermopylæ, the thrilling page of Livy, and the magnificent eloquence of Cicero, find no responsive echo in their souls; for the fountains of such feeling were dried up, when they first gushed forth, and have forgotten how to flow; the chambers of the mind, which contain these treasures of noble emotion, have been sealed up, and there is no watchword to open them; and thousands have gone down to the grave, whom only the last trump of the archangel shall awaken to a knowledge of their rights, inherited from the Almighty, and enduring through eternity.

In no way is the mind more perfectly the image of God, than in its universal capacity,—its power of receiving thought in every shape;—for within it, are enclosed the germs of infinity, which are destined to expand for ever; education can add no new power, no perception, no attribute, that was not originally implanted in the soul;—its native form, though undeveloped, is perfect, and all that education can do, or should aspire to do, is to call forth, in their intended proportions, the faculties which already exist. Wherever it fails to do this, it is imperfect, it does not perform its highest object.

Education may fill the mind with knowledge; it may confer the learning of all ages; and yet if it does not expand the mind, if it does not draw forth with a genial power the immortal germs which are planted there by the hand of God, its end is not fulfilled.

Finally, Christianity is the highest degree of education, because it completes that expansion of the mind, which education, in the common acceptance of the term, commences. Both act

upon the mind in the same manner, but in a different degree ; —education begins and Christianity finishes ;—the former unfolds the bud ; the latter ripens it into perfection ;—the one lays the foundation, upon which the other rears the magnificent superstructure, till it reaches the heavens.

There are different orders of truth. Those which belong to the material universe are in their nature finite. When the mind has once grasped them, they are entirely comprehended ;—their beginning and their end are gathered within the reach of the intellect, and are seen together. Of this nature are the truths of science, in all its variety of departments, and the axioms and demonstrations of pure mathematics.

But there is a higher order of truth, which opens a boundless field to the mind, where it may range for ever, and still discover new beauty, and new wonders, and increasing variety. Of this nature are the truths presented by Christianity,—the wondrous revelations of Infinite Power, and Infinite Love, of dateless origin, and eternal duration.

It may be said, indeed, and with justice, that infinite truths are beyond the comprehension of the human intellect. But this does not prevent them from acting on the mind. They beam upon it with a power to develop it for ever. They lead it on, in paths which never end, but which constantly reveal new glory and happiness. They enable the soul to rise up and meet its Creator, and they offer in the contemplation of his character, subjects of thought which will not fail to expand the faculties in their godlike proportions for ever.

These are truths of the deepest moment, not merely to education societies and teachers, but to every human being. They show us that civilization, freedom, education, Christianity, have their birth-place and dwelling in the soul. They assure us that the noblest sphere of action for the patriot, the philanthropist and the teacher, is the inward world, where the germs of liberty, and power of happiness, and of religion are placed

by the hand of God ;—and they declare to us, that our highest duty is to unfold these germs of our own souls.

The same immortal principle which in the beginning called the universe into being, and which sustains it through each moment of its existence, the action of Infinite Intelligence, is breathed into the soul of every human being, with power to quicken it into life. Let this principle but operate there, though all be void and without form, like the primeval chaos,—let the spirit but move on the face of the deep, and a world will arise from the confused and undistinguishable elements, which shall far surpass in loveliness the universe around us, and which shall not perish, though the heavens and the earth pass away.

**LECTURE VIII.**



**ON**

**SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.**

**By S. R. HALL.**



## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

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THE proper government of children is important to themselves and to society. Unused to self-government,—easily excited to cherish anger and all the passions to which human nature is subject,—alike ignorant of the means of safety and of the dangers which surround them,—devoid of experience, and liable to be misled, *if left to themselves*, few, *very few*, would survive the period of childhood and youth. And would not this *small* number be poorly prepared for the exigences of life, or the enjoyments proffered by our Creator? A child can experience scarcely a greater misfortune, therefore, than to be his *own* master,—to be left without restraint, while he is acquiring that experience which qualifies him to be the friend of himself and the friend of his race. The history of nearly every such person is the history of vice and of misery. The developments furnished by clans, tribes or nations, where only trifling restraint is imposed on the young, and that chiefly to protect them from immediate and positive destruction, are always a history of degradation and suffering, revolting to the philanthropist and the Christian. It is no wonder, then, that every nation, as it has advanced in civilization, refinement and virtue, has evinced more and more solicitude on the subject of proper modes of **EDUCATION** and **GOVERNMENT**; and that, in

the revelation God has made to man, these should be made so frequently the subject of instruction and precept. To us, as Christians and patriots, the proper government of children can hardly be ranked higher in importance than it merits, or be discussed with more interest than it ought to excite.

It is the duty of the *parent*, to exercise a due control over the offspring, of whose existence he has been the cause. Instinct ever confirms this, in the control which many of the lower orders of animals exert over their young, and in the ready obedience which such often manifest to the will of the parent, before they are capable of self-protection. How much more obviously does it devolve on parents, among our *own species*, whose young are more helpless, and whose infancy continues longer than those of any other race of animals!

Were this duty faithfully performed, by all who are entrusted with the care of offspring, the subject of this lecture would be greatly diminished in importance. But hourly observation too clearly shows, that family discipline comes very far short of securing the safety and happiness of *children, parents or society*. While some are ignorant of the weight of responsibility attached to the condition of being parents, others are reckless of it. While some are devoid of the requisite skill to restrain and to cultivate habits of submission to authority and law, others are too indolent to attempt either. While some allow business, pleasure, or the ambitious pursuit of power, to absorb every faculty and every wish, another very large class are, by their own conduct and example, leading their children to violate both the laws of God and man. And, beyond all this, multitudes of parents, who desire to train up their children in the way they should go, find all their efforts thwarted by the corrupting influence and example of those who have never been governed, and from whose influence they have no power to shield them.

It has been well said, that "to send an uneducated and ungoverned child into the world, is but little better than to

turn a mad dog into the street ;" yet, without some means, other than parental discipline, *many of the children of the land will be, must be, turned out on society*, with no respect for the laws, and without habits of submission to them. From such as these it is, that our prisons receive their criminal inmates ; to awe and restrain these, chiefly, our criminal code is formed, and our judiciary employed. And but for the authority delegated by public opinion and judicial decisions to the teachers of our primary and public schools, the apparatus of houses of correction, gaols and prisons, must have been indefinitely multiplied.

It will be my object, in this address,

I. To exhibit, concisely, some considerations, which show the importance of school discipline.

II. To advert to some things, which indicate erroneous or defective discipline ; and,

III. To suggest a few things, as prerequisites to establishing that course of discipline which is healthful.

1. As the young are unfitted for *self-government*, owing to their ignorance and to the evil propensities *generally*,—may I not, with the exception of the Son of Bethlehem, say, always,—exhibited, it follows, of course, that they *must* be governed by some one, or be greatly injured by neglect.

It is a well known fact, as before implied, that many are not governed at home, by parents or guardians. A majority of those, in this part of the country, at least, are sent to school for a longer or shorter period during minority. If, therefore, they are governed at all, they must be governed at school ; if brought under healthful discipline any where, it must be there ; if taught to respect law, to yield to authority ever, they must take these lessons at school. The consequences, resulting from a *failure* to maintain the discipline demanded by the exigences of the school, must be too obvious to make it necessary to dwell on them.

2. Good discipline is essential to the acquisition of knowledge.

"Order is heaven's first law," stamped on the very face of nature. It would be unphilosophical, therefore, to expect great intellectual acquisitions, where there is not order. This can be established only where, to its *violation*, some suitable *penalty* is attached.

Government implies law ; and if laws exist, the right to enforce them must exist also. Where no such right is delegated to the teacher, it is impossible for him to render his instructions valuable. He cannot secure attention to them. Besides, the human mind is so constituted, that, without long training, it cannot avoid giving attention to the objects around, and, of course, cannot practise sufficient abstraction, to study in the midst of confusion and misrule.

Calm, patient and continued attention to the principles of science, and the application of those principles is requisite, to enable us to retain a knowledge of them. It is obviously impossible, for any one to give such attention, where his rights are not secured. On such security no one can depend, where, to the violation of law, no penalty is attached.

3. Judicious discipline is indispensable, in order to secure the *great objects of education*.

I use education here, in its broadest sense. These objects are, to develop all the faculties of the mind, invigorate the senses, cultivate and guide the affections, govern the passions, and lead the young to act under the moral sanctions of their being. Or, in other words, the great object of education is, to fit the young for duty, safety, usefulness and happiness, in all the exigences of their existence.

Without discipline, which of these ends can be secured? We have seen, that positive acquisition cannot be made in the midst of disorder. Disorder must prevail, where discipline is not maintained. It must be impossible, also, to expand and strengthen the powers of the mind, as this can be done only by calling them into vigorous exercise, and strengthening them by use. The memory, taste, judgment, imagination, are all to

be cultivated, in order to the proper improvement of the intellect; but, which of these faculties can be trained, where a school is a place of misrule and a scene of disorder? Can the memory be improved, in the midst of interruption? Can the taste be formed, in the midst of irregularity?—the judgment rendered accurate and acute, from examples only of its abuse? And as for imagination, how far it can be accurately educated, in such circumstances, I need not stop to inquire.

I said it is one of the objects of education, to cultivate the kind and social affections. From the proper exercise of these, much of the happiness of life must flow. But, in a school without discipline, they must find a soil more sterile than the Nubian desert, and blasts colder than the winds of Greenland,—vapors more destructive than the breath of the siroc. And yet, what is man, without a heart, without affections? What is man, when he makes himself the centre of the universe? What is man, unsocial, sordid, misanthropic, but a libel on himself, as he came from the hands of his Maker?

The child, who is never taught to bow to any law but that of self-will,—to submit to no restraint but positive necessity,—to regard any right but his own, is equally unfitted to possess or communicate enjoyment. While at school, he is in the midst of a miniature world; and if he is not led to cherish kind and sympathetic emotions towards those around him, he will, of course, be left to cherish feelings of an opposite character.

But this is not all. A school, not brought under proper discipline, is often the hot-bed of the evil passions. Anger, revenge, malevolence, selfishness, develop a most vigorous growth, and too often attain a gigantic strength.

The school, then, devoid of order, law and submission, does not merely fail of accomplishing the positive good that is intended, but does lay the foundation for great and lasting evils, both to its members and society. Here, indeed, are taken,

perhaps, the first regular lessons in nullification, and are formed the first resolves to set at defiance the laws of society and of Jehovah. Let me illustrate, by an example. "I did not mind her, and she can't make me do it," said a little urchin, as he fled from the school-house, the other day, after having broken the hold of his teacher. "I did n't mind her, and I never will mind another teacher as long as I live." The teacher exclaimed, "Well, I am glad you are gone!" How many such lessons have been taken in our schools, entrusted to the care of inefficient teachers, or in the family of inefficient parents, another day will fully disclose. That they are not unfrequent, the confessions of criminals too fully show.

A habit of cheerfully submitting to the laws under which we are placed by our Creator, is, obviously, one of the highest value. Without it, happiness must be an unusual guest. Without it, safety is out of the question.

After these suggestions, with regard to its importance, it will be a very natural inquiry, *What is healthful discipline?* and another would follow immediately, *How is it to be secured?* I shall not, however, attempt a *direct* answer to either, but advert to some results, which do not indicate healthful discipline.

1. Feelings are sometimes cherished by children, that *laws are barriers to their enjoyments*. Such feelings indicate, I conceive, erroneous discipline.

On no subject, surely, is it so important that correct impressions should be produced on the minds of children, as with regard to the object and tendency of laws, both divine and human.

The following sentiment, expressed by a former president of the Institute,\* all, I am sure, must adopt: "It hath pleased Almighty God, to place us under a constitution of universal

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\* Rev. Dr. Wayland.

law. This having been established by a perfectly wise Creator, it may be easily supposed, will remain unchangeable. His laws will not be altered for our convenience. We may *obey* them or *disobey* them; we may see them or not see them; we may be wise or unwise; but they will be rigidly and unalterably enforced. Thus must it ever be, until we have the power to resist Omnipotence.

“Again: It is sufficiently evident, that the very constitution, which God has established, is, with infinite wisdom and benevolence, devised for just such a being, physical, intellectual and moral, as man.

“By obedience to the laws of God, man may be as happy as his present state will allow. Misery, sooner or later, is always the result of a violation of those laws our Creator has established. Hence, our great business here, is to know and obey the laws of our Creator.”

It cannot be asserted, I know, that all *human* laws are adapted to secure the *highest happiness* of those for whom they are designed; for, through passion, pride and prejudice, laws may be made by those, to whom a law-making power is delegated, that are wrong,—are arrayed in opposition to the laws of God. Such laws may exist. But, is it saying more than the truth, that, in our own land, the laws of society, in general, are established in *wisdom*, and *cannot be violated with impunity*? They are not *intended* to endanger our safety, invade our rights, or defeat our enjoyment, but to secure them all. So far as founded in reason,—so far as they are derived from the great laws of our Maker, if obeyed, they must, they will do it.

Whenever modes of discipline are adopted in a family or school, that have a tendency to lead its subjects to the belief, that the laws under which they are necessarily placed are cruel,—are opposed to their safety and enjoyment,—that discipline fails to be healthful. For, human nature being what it is,

there will be efforts, either secretly to *evade* law and authority, or directly to *trample* them under feet.

2. That discipline is faulty, which naturally leads its subjects to be disaffected towards him who administers it.

Order must be maintained in schools and families, or they cease to be a blessing. The appropriate head of both is, by common consent, to govern those who compose the one or the other. This office, is both honorable and dignified, and of course, ought to be faithfully filled, and its duties judiciously performed.

If the laws and regulations are good, and are obeyed, they secure happiness. If, therefore, the subjects of discipline cherish feelings of hatred to the office or to the officer, there must be something wrong, for the object of discipline is not secured.

But it will perhaps, be asked, whether it is possible, to inflict punishment on an offender, without his being disaffected towards the administrator? I do not assert, that it can in all cases be done, so as to prevent angry feelings, at the time, from being cherished,—but I do suppose, it can be done so as to bring the conscience, in the hours of calm reflection, to the side of the administrator; and if this be not secured, the benefit of punishment is at least only partial. Nor have I, in my own experience, ever found evidence to believe, that the instances are numerous where punishment, rightly administered, will, even at the time of administering it, produce anger, or array the delinquent against the law which requires his punishment.

But I freely acknowledge, that I should betray great ignorance of human nature, not to expect this result in many schools, with their present organization. I refer to those, especially, where large numbers of children are placed in a single school,—large numbers, who are sent to school, year after year as a *business* to which they *must* attend, and who do not find, in their accommodations, their comfort, health or

intellectual improvement regarded; and where, to be awed into present subjection, they are placed under more than martial law. If no schools of this kind *now* exist, undoubtedly such have existed; those a principal object of which was to keep, confine, but not to *educate* the young. Will it be objected, that the position I assume militates against the discipline of our Creator?—that the position I have taken implies defect in his government, because many are displeased with his providences, and fret against the Lord under chastisement? I grant, that many in this world are displeased with God's dispensations. They "hate Him without a cause." But let it be remembered, the system of God's government is not fully developed in *this* world, and in that, where final awards are to be administered,—we read that "every mouth will be stopped."

When the nature of law is rightly understood, and the inevitable consequences of its visitation are known, how can any one feel disaffected towards him, who rightly administers the penalty? It is a law that fire will burn, and water will drown. How unnatural, to suppose, that you will be angry with the element, for consequences, which you know must result from thrusting your hand into the former, or throwing yourself into the latter. A *good* law, must have a penalty attached to its violation, for how can it be a good law without this? And if it becomes my duty, as a parent or teacher, to inflict that penalty, do I properly administer it, if it leaves the subject disaffected towards me?

Will it be said by any one, that there is a practical difficulty,—that in this imperfect state, it is very difficult to inflict punishment, under the influence of right feelings? This is admitted; but still, ought I to proceed to do it, when I know I am under the influence of wrong feelings? If I do it thus, can I expect good to result from it, to the subject? Ought I to expect he will or can cherish right feelings towards the law, or him who administers it?

3. Those methods of discipline seem to me defective or erroneous, which do not regard the *future*, as well as the *present* good of the young,—or, which have reference, merely, to the present convenience and success of a school, but are not designed to promote the lasting good of its members.

I have already implied, that the school is to be a place of education, as well as instruction. To acquire knowledge is important, and, during some periods of life, may be the more important object. But is it so at all periods? Indeed, can a person be either the more happy or useful, merely from the knowledge he has acquired, irrespective of the *habits* he has formed, or the *opinions* he has cherished, with regard to the social relations and moral duties? With a habit of mind, which leads me to feel that the laws of society are opposed to my happiness,—that restraints imposed on my passions are cruelties; that the laws of my nature are stern opponents to my enjoyment,—how can I be happy any where, whether possessed of a vigorous and cultivated intellect or not?

The discipline of a school ought, certainly, to have a constant and special reference to the *formation* of character. It must also have reference to the health and physical energy. If, by any method of punishment, any confinement, any violation of the physical laws of their being, the health becomes impaired, or the seeds of future disease be sown, the rights of the pupils are certainly invaded, and the teacher or some one is justly chargeable with fault. That such discipline fails of answering the ends which it should have in view, *all* know, —that it is very common, many are forced to believe.

I may, as a teacher, consult my own convenience, if I am to punish; I may take the most summary process, or that which will occupy the least time, or which will gratify my personal antipathies against the offender,—but how different is such a course from that, to which, as a parent, I am willing to submit my own children! I desire them, if I cherish the feelings of a parent, to be so influenced by proper discipline, as to be pre-

pared to do right, without constraint,—to do right, from the love of so doing. But the course I condemn, will have no such tendency to lead to this, and of course cannot be right.

4. Discipline is defective, when it does not tend to cherish the habit and strengthen the power of *self-government*.

I do not say, that the *sole* object of school discipline, should be to cherish habits of self-government. It should, undoubtedly, secure the present good and convenience of teacher and pupil. But this falls far short of accomplishing all the ends of discipline. As the knowledge communicated is not for the present, so much as the future good of the young, so the government exercised over them should relate to the future as well as the present.

Each one, at a certain age, is expected to be left to his own discretion, to govern himself. The earlier he is prepared for this, the better is he qualified for enjoyment; and the more secure are the foundations of happiness. To qualify children to do this, should then be a prominent object in the discipline of schools,—this being one of the greatest blessings they can confer on their members.

If the teacher so holds the reins, that his pupils are moved by his presence only to do right,—if they are never allowed to try their own opinions, to attempt self-government,—to feel responsibility,—or, in other words, to practise self-government,—they can certainly cherish but little confidence in their ability,—whether they possess it or not. That kind of discipline, or supervision over the young, which leads them to regard merely the question, whether they shall be punished or not, for any particular course of conduct, or to inquire only, whether the teacher will be pleased or displeased, and not whether the course of conduct is *right* or *wrong*, is, most obviously, far from being likely to secure the best results of judicious discipline. If I may be allowed to express my personal conviction, with regard to the *most common* defects in school discipline, I must say that I regard this as one of them.

What proportion of those, placed at the head of schools, of one grade or another, make it a prominent object to teach their pupils the art of self-government? Is not the proportion, admitting the confessions of teachers themselves as evidence, very small? And can any doubt, that one of the greatest favors which you can confer on a child, is to teach him *how* to govern himself, and lead him to do it?

Do you ask how this is to be done? I reply, in short, Make the scholar acquainted with the true character of law,—with its value and tendency,—point out to him the various relations he sustains to his fellows, and his Maker,—explain to him the responsibilities under which he acts,—make him acquainted with the true nature of both happiness and misery,—with the way in which one is to be secured, and the other averted;—and, above all, lead him to act in view of the inevitable consequences, and you will have, in some measure at least, accomplished your object.

5. Systems of government and discipline, are defective or erroneous, the tendency of which is not to cultivate affection, law, benevolence, the best qualities of the heart, and to counteract selfishness, anger and the evil passions.

A discipline, which overlooks the existence of these propensities and passions, on the one hand, and disregards them on the other, cannot be adapted to promote the security and enjoyment of the young. Its features bear no resemblance to the laws of our Creator. How striking the attention paid to *both* by our Saviour, in his instructions to his disciples on the Mount. What was the object of the benedictions,—Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peace-makers,—but to cultivate in his followers those principles which have been mentioned as requiring the aid of discipline to cherish? The injunctions, "*love your enemies*," "*do good to them that hate you*," enjoin, *most forcibly* the cultivation of love and kindness. If those who had drank so deeply of his spirit, as his disciples, *needed* these instructions,

how much more do the young, while their minds are in a forming state !

And further, how strikingly does our Saviour aim to counteract the evil propensities, when he requires us "to forgive men their trespasses,"—"lay not up treasures on earth,"—"love not the world,"—"judge not, that ye be not judged,"—"if he smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also!" And if such injunctions were needed for men, *good men*, how can any system of discipline for the *young* be healthful, that overlooks or makes no provisions for eradicating the evils against which these injunctions are aimed? But I forbear to enlarge.

I might state many other things, which render systems of discipline unhealthful; but as most of them are but off-shoots from these, I will proceed to give an answer,—already involved in previous remarks,—to the question, *What is a judicious course of discipline?*

Obviously, *that which leads the young to form a proper estimate of the necessity, nature and benefits of LAW; that which leads them to revere and love him who wisely administers it; that which promotes the lasting as well as the present good of its subjects; which leads them to cultivate habits of self-government, and cherishes the virtuous, but eradicates the evil propensities of the human heart.* So much, at least, ought every system of discipline to aim at and accomplish. The discipline, which aims to accomplish these objects, is healthful,—is adapted to the wants of its subjects, and must be attended with great blessings. But there are various obstacles to such a course. Allow me, therefore, to mention a few things, which are necessary prerequisites for its establishment in schools.

1. Enlightened and moral public opinion among the *parents of the children*, especially when they board at home.

This is necessary, as a means of leading children to *expect that they shall be governed*, and also as a means of *encouraging*

ing and sustaining the teacher. If wanting, therefore, it will be scarcely possible to establish and maintain healthful discipline.

In some instances, ignorant parents deny the *right* of teachers to use coercive measures in *any* case. Let this be the prevalent opinion in any district or neighborhood; let it be understood to be the popular opinion, and the influence is exhibited by the children, in bold relief. If they submit to correction, it will be only because they feel themselves the weaker party, and on the same principle that they would submit to the demands of the highwayman or pirate. Let the system of discipline be ever so judicious,—let it be characterized by ever so much regard to the personal feeling of the children,—by ever so much kindness, still it will be *opposed*; and whether opposed or not, cannot produce the end to be desired. It will not, cannot, lead its subjects to reverence law and respect government.

That this is a very prominent obstacle to the success of schools in many places, I have abundant proof, from the reports of scores of teachers, who have experienced its evil influence. In many places, even among the descendants of the Pilgrims, public sentiment needs to be *enlightened* and *corrected* on this subject. Let the error prevail and extend, and sooner or later it must inevitably undermine and subvert the institution of free schools,—one of the most precious legacies of our Pilgrim fathers. Here and every where, then, as a friend of schools, I claim for the teacher the *right* to use coercive measures, when other efforts fail to enable him to maintain order. The *master*, equally with the parent, has the RIGHT to resort to the rod, in cases of stubborn disobedience. Let the right be every where *claimed*, but, at the same time, no where *abused*.

2. In order to secure the best results of school discipline, *children should be governed at home*.

If, at the age when children usually enter school, they have never been made to submit to law,—even though they have

yielded to occasional fits of authority in parents or guardians,—it must require time to bring them into proper subjection ; and though this may be accomplished by the teacher, yet a part of the benefit they might have derived from discipline will be lost. But on so plain a topic, I will not enlarge.

3. A school must be furnished with comfortable accommodations, in order that good government may be established.

Any one in a state of suffering, or rendered uncomfortable, from whatever cause, is not prepared to improve, under the very best government and instruction. Furnish a school-room with uncomfortable seats,—let it be cold and filthy,—let the scholars be crowded, so as necessarily to jostle and disturb each other, whenever they move, and it must be utterly impossible, that healthful discipline can be fully established, and its blessings enjoyed.

4. Another prerequisite to good discipline is, the observance of local, unfriendly influences.

Local circumstances are often highly injurious. If the school-house be where “four ways meet,” or near a store or grog-shop, or other place of public resort, which is a scene of vice and dissipation, or if any similar cause exist, it is rarely possible to establish and maintain healthful discipline, and to secure from it all the beneficial results it might otherwise furnish.

5. The last prerequisite to good discipline I have time to notice is, *a good teacher*.

The more essential natural qualifications in him, are, *good judgment, benevolence, firmness, virtue, or goodness, and health*. To these must be added the requisite amount of knowledge.

Few stations make so large a demand for the exercise of good judgment, or common sense, as that filled by the teacher. But having elsewhere expressed my views on this, I may omit them here.

The teacher must exercise kind and benevolent feelings

towards the young, or the power with which he is entrusted, *will* be abused. The love the *parent must* cherish for his offspring makes it comparatively safe, to commit to him their maintenance and government. He is the monarch of his house ; and if not controlled by *love*, might and would be the *tyrant*, as well as the monarch.

To the teacher are committed those who are not his flesh and blood ; those, often, that he has never seen till they are subjected to his authority, and over whom he is to exercise important control. Let him cherish toward them no kind and benevolent feelings,—let him regard nothing but his *own* convenience and ease,—and how is it possible that he should lead them to cherish toward him those sentiments, which will prepare them to submit to and obey him. It is a trite but *true* remark, “Love is the loan for love ;” and the course of nature will sooner change, than that children will *love*, and *love to obey* those who have no kind feelings towards them. No guise will answer, no efforts to practise on them will succeed, no pretensions will give credit, if love be not genuine. There are no more eagle-eyed observers of the secret feelings of the hearts of parents or teachers, than young children. Say what you will, they will know whether you cherish kind feelings towards them or not. You *must* love them, or it is unsafe to trust you with the power of governing them.

The teacher must be virtuous ; that is, he must be willing to obey the dictates of an enlightened conscience ; he must be willing to do right himself, or he will fail of leading others to do right. This is certainly a principle, the truth of which none can doubt. Example is almost omnipotent. The *teacher* is under the laws established by his Creator and by society, as much as his pupils. A most important part of his duty, as an educator, is, to lead them to respect and obey those laws. A habit of cheerful and ready submission to these will not be formed, where there is not virtue or goodness. The flimsy guise of pretended obedience to them will be penetrated by

the youngest child in the room. The deception, once discovered, will not soon be forgotten. I must be really willing to do right,—must cherish real respect for the laws of God and man,—or I must fail of convincing the members of my school that I do so. If I cannot lead them to cherish respect for the laws of their *Maker*, I may expect, of course, that they will cherish little respect for the laws and regulations of the *school*. But if I bring them under the influence of virtuous example,—if I do right myself,—I then have a fulcrum for my lever, which makes it nearly irresistible.

I mentioned firmness, as one other essential natural qualification of the teacher. This, to some extent, can be *cultivated*; but we can hardly hope to create it, where it is entirely wanting. Without it, government will not be self-consistent nor efficient. The teacher, who can be swerved from his purpose by his own sympathy, or prevented, by apathy or fear, from doing his duty, will always fail of establishing proper discipline. If his government is marked by imbecility or inconsistency, it is impossible that his pupils should respect it and be awed by it. The government of passion, or that characterized by prejudice, will of necessity partake of this character, and will be liable to be both *partial* and *unjust*.

Health is so important to the successful government of a school, no illustration can be needed.

A requisite amount of knowledge, both with regard to the end to be obtained by discipline, and the appropriate means of obtaining it, is also indispensably necessary to the teacher. If ignorant of the *end* to be secured, he cannot, of course, but be ignorant of the means he ought to put in requisition; if ignorant of the latter, his efforts are made at random, and *bedlam* may be inscribed over the door of his school-room.

Is it asked, what is the particular kind of knowledge which he must possess? I answer, the knowledge of the great principles of both intellectual and moral philosophy,—of human nature in general,—of the physical, intellectual and moral

necessities of children. He must know how they view objects, how they think, or reason, and arrive at conclusions. He must also know *himself*,—know how to govern himself,—and how to make this efficacious in governing them.

Nor is it unimportant, that he have a knowledge of the usual results of different modes of *punishment*; for to this he must, more or less, frequently resort. He should, at least, know, that the rod, to be most efficacious, *must not be put in requisition, in general, with great frequency*; and also know, that it CANNOT safely be at all times dispensed with.

With three remarks, I close.

1. Systems of discipline, or plans for the government of a school, require some variation from attending circumstances, the age and sex of the pupils, the influences by which it is surrounded, and often by the character of its numbers. But still the great features may and ought to be the same; *mild, firm, just and uniform*. Some regulations, which might be highly necessary and useful in one school, must not be enforced in another. Some things may be admitted to pass without censure in one school, which, in another, would excite strong disapprobation.

The children of one denomination of professed Christians may be allowed to sit with their heads covered, because they are so taught, as a part of their religious duties; while, in another, the practice would not be tolerated.

A smaller number of laws will be required in a school of half a score, than in a school of half a hundred; as the government of a family requires a less number of rules than that of an army; the government of a town than that of a city or state.

So a school in a city may require greater severity in administering discipline, than one in the country, because its number is large, and the temptations to do wrong greater. An academy or select school may require some regulations different from a district school; but in all, *order should be maintained*,

habits of submission to authority and law should be cultivated, good propensities be cherished, and evil ones eradicated or controlled; in all, habits of self-government should be constantly cultivated.

Attention to all these things must be given by the teacher of every school, of whatever grade, or he will prove recreant to the trust reposed in him by his patrons, his pupils, his country and his God. The influence of his labors will be felt in all the ramifications of society,—will continue long after his pupils have left the nurseries of science. They will be felt in the endless periods of existence beyond the grave. With what justice may he exclaim, whenever entering his school-room, “how solemn is this place!—how weighty the responsibility attached to my office!”

2. With the defects in our systems of school discipline the public is in no inconsiderable degree chargeable, and not the teachers alone. Teachers, unquestionably, often err, but they are not to be charged with *all* the blame. If they assume the responsibility of teaching, without due qualifications, the public both invite to this and *sanction* it, by holding out no inducements to a full preparation, and by employing those who are not qualified. Committees for examining candidates, in many instances, scarcely interrogate them on the subject of discipline. If they possess the requisite knowledge of the branches of science they are required to teach, it is very unusual to withhold approbation. But if, on the other hand, they were examined with regard to their views of discipline,—if they are examined with regard to their qualifications for establishing and maintaining healthful discipline,—if told that deficiency here is *more* to be feared than deficiency in possessing the requisite amount of knowledge,—then *more* of the failures, which are continually occurring, might be justly chargeable to teachers themselves.

3. My last remark is, none can hope to establish and maintain healthful discipline in school, without preparation; and

yet, how many annually do offer their services as teachers, and are accepted and employed by the community, who have never spent a day in serious preparation! How disastrous to myriads of children, society, alas! know now but too well; but another life will more fully disclose.

All are, in a greater or less degree, responsible for these evils; *all are bound to do what they can towards lessening or removing them.*

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